A DISCOURSE Concerning TROUBLE of MIND, AND THE Diſeaſe of Melancholly.

In Three PARTS.

Written for the Uſe of ſuch as are, or have been Exerciſed by the ſame.

By TIMOTHY ROGERS, M. A. who was long afflicted with both.

To which are Annexed, Some LETTERS from ſeveral DIVINES, relating to the ſame Subject.

LONDON:

Printed for *Thomas Parkhurſt*, and *Thomas Cockerill* at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns* in *Cheapſide*; and at the *Three Legs* in the *Poultrey*, MDCXCI.

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To the very much

HONOURED and RESPECTED

LADY,

The Lady MARY LANE.

MADAM,

YOUR LADYSHIP has a very juſt claim to this DEDICATION; and under your Patronage this BOOK can with good aſſurance venture abroad: You, more than any other, have enquired of me concerning the following Treatiſe, and more frequently urged me to Print it. You were pleaſed to Honour me, during my long Affliction, with your kind Viſits; and though I was greatly afflicted, and in degrees beyond what are

very common to Men, yet you did not a little revive me by your Compaſſionate and Gentle words, and by the Charitable hopes that you had of my deliverance, though you have often heard me ſay, That I ſhould never be delivered. I thought that I ſhould never have any more eaſe in my pained Body, nor ever any more hope or quiet in my troubled Soul: But that God who is Omnipotent, and who heard your Prayers, and the Prayers of many others in my behalf, hath wrought a double Salvation for me. He who is the Lord of Nature, has healed my Body; and He who is *the Father of Mercies, and the God of all Grace*, has given reſt to my weary Soul. None have any Cauſe to preſume, when they conſider what miſeries I felt for a long time, and how I was overwhelmed with the deepeſt ſorrows, for many doleful

Months

Months together; neither have any cauſe to deſpair, they cannot be more low, more near to Death and Hell than I thought my ſelf to be, and yet I live, and am not without ſome refreſhing hope of God's acceptance, and can ſay with the Prophet, *Let Iſrael hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy: And with him is plenteous redemption.*

Your LADYSHIP has never, indeed, been afflicted with that Diſtemper and thoſe Anxieties of Soul whereof I treat in the following Book, and I heartily pray you never may: For MELANCHOLLY is the worſt of all Diſtempers; and thoſe ſinking and guilty Fears which it brings along with it, are inexpreſſibly dreadful. But I know that you have been in manifold Afflictions, and you have had ſeveral very great Loſſes: You loſt ſome years ago a Father, who was, indeed, in all re-

ſpects, for his Holineſs, his Even-temper, and his Publick and Charitable Spirit, worthy to be loved; and I am ſure you greatly loved him, as he you, to the very laſt. You loſt a Mother, whom all that knew her, greatly valued for the skill and experience that ſhe had in matters of Religion, and eſpecially for her admirable acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures; and tho in the latter part of her Life, ſhe ſaw not the Light of this World, yet her Soul was recreated with a Light Spiritual and Divine; and the loſs of her ſight was abundantly recompenced to her, by the clearer views which ſhe had of God, and of a Life to come. And not to mention other Loſſes, you have loſt ſeveral Children, in whom there was all the ſweetneſs of youth, all that good temper, and thoſe blooming appearances of hopefulneſs which could make ſuch lit-

little Plants deſirable; but you have born even ſo great a Loſs with a ſubmiſſive and a Chriſtian Patience, as knowing that you have not ſo much cauſe to mourn for thoſe that are gone, as to rejoyce in thoſe that are left; and who are a very great Comfort to you; and may they long be ſo.

As I have had for ſome time heretofore, the Honour to ſojourn in your Family, I always obſerved in you that Meekneſs and Good Temper, that Affability and Condeſcention to your Inferiors, which made your Converſation very exemplary, and made it eaſie and pleaſant for any perſons to be in your Houſe. If all the Ladies and Women in the World that are called *Good*, were of a Temper ſo happy as your Ladyſhip's, What a quiet and peaceable World ſhould we then have! The mutual Love in which Sir

THOMAS and You live, renders, indeed, the Married ſtate very excellent and Honourable.

I thought, when I came to deſcribe my inward Troubles, I ſhould have deſcribed them much more largely; but I durſt not review them too particularly, leſt the very thoughts of them, ſhould again, in ſome meaſure, overwhelm me: And, indeed, *Inward Terrors, are things that may be ſadly felt; but they cannot be fully expreſs'd.* To have the ſenſe of Tormenting, Racking Pain, the immediate proſpect of Death, and together with this, an apprehenſion of God's Diſpleaſure; and the fear of being caſt out of his Glorious Preſence for ever, this was a part of my Caſe; And who can deſcribe that Anguiſh and Tribulation, which ſuch apprehenſions cauſe in a deſolate and a mourning Soul! I have in the following Treatiſe

tiſe ſaid as much as will, I ſuppoſe, be believed by thoſe who have never been in ſuch a woful ſtate; and if I had ſaid more, it might perhaps ſink ſome poor ſouls, who are already low enough; and if I cannot help them, which I deſign, yet I will be ſure, as far as in me lies, not to make them worſe.

MADAM, I could ſay a great many excellent things of your LADYSHIP, and which, in the opinion of all that have the happineſs to be acquainted with you, would be no flattery; but I know your Virtues are Illuſtrious, and evident enough of themſelves, without my endeavouring to place them in a more open Light. Excuſe, I entreat you, the boldneſs of this DEDICATION, in which, to ſpeak ſincerely, I have a great deal of ſelfiſhneſs; for I queſtion not, but by the means of your Name, this BOOK will be more

more publick, and so be more serviceable to people under long and sore afflictions, whereof this miserable World is very full. I wish you a continuance of the Blessings of Heaven, with those of this Earth, which you have in great abundance; And that the *Candle of the Lord may constantly shine on your Tabernacle, on Sir* Thomas, *your Self, and all your Children*; and I desire you to be assured, That there is none, that more heartily prays for your present and Eternal welfare, than

London, *Sept.* 8. 1691

Honoured MADAM,

Your Ladyship's Most Obliged Servant,

TIMOTHY ROGERS.

THE PREFACE:

CONTAINING

Several Advices to the *Relations* and *Friends* of *Melancholly People*.

THERE *is a very great difference between such as are only under trouble of Conscience, and such whose Bodies are greatly diseased at the same time: A sense of Sin, and great sorrow for it, may in some persons not change at all their former state of health; and the mercy of God may so speedily relieve them, that they suffer no visible decays in their Constitution, but are so happy as to have a sound Mind and Body both at once.* 'Tis *not with relation to such that I write this Preface; but for such as are under* a deep, and a rooted *Melancholly: And to the Friends of such I think it is very necessary to give the following Advices.*

First,

I. *First*, Look upon your distressed Friends, as under one of the worst Distempers to which this Miserable Life is obnoxious. *Melancholly seizes on the Brain and Spirits, and incapacitates them for Thought or Action; it confounds and disturbs all their thoughts, and unavoidably fills them with anguish and vexation; of which there is no resemblance in any other Distemper, unless it be that of a Raging Fever. I take it for granted, and I verily believe, I say nothing but what is true; When this ugly Humour is deeply fixed, and hath spread its Malignant Influence over every part, 'tis as vain a thing to strive against it, as to strive against a Fever, or a Pluriſie, the Gout, or the Stone, which are very grievous to Nature, but which a man by resolution, and the force of briskness and courage cannot help. One would be glad to be rid of such oppressing things, but all our striving will not make them go away. And of all the Inconveniences of* Melancholly, The want of sleep, *which it usually brings along with it, is one of the worst. It is very reviving to a man that is in pain all the day, to think that he shall sleep at night; but when he has no prospect nor hope of that for several nights together, oh, what confusion does then seize upon*

upon him! he is then like one upon a rack, whose anguish will not suffer him to rest; by this means the Faculties of the Soul are weakned, and all its Operations disturbed and clouded, and the poor Body languishes and pines away at the same time. And this Disease is more formidable than any other, because it commonly lasts very long; *It is a long time before it come to its height, and usually as long ere it decline again; and all this long season of its continuance, is full of fear and torment, of horror and amazement. It is in every respect sad and overwhelming; it is a state of darkness that has no discernable beams of Light. 'Tis as a Land of darkness, on which no Sun at all seems to shine. It does generally indeed first begin at the Body, and then conveys its venom to the Mind; and if any thing could be found that might keep the Blood and Spirits in their due temper and motion, this would obstruct its further progress, and in a great measure keep the Soul clear. I pretend not to tell you what Medicines are proper to remove it, and I know of none; I leave you to advise with such as are learned in the Profession of* Physick, *and especially to have recourse to such Doctors as have themselves felt it; for it is impossible fully to understand the nature of it any other way than*

than by Experience: and that Perſon is highly to be valued, whoſe endeavours God will bleſs to the removal of this obſtinate and violent Diſeaſe. And as old Mr. Greenham *ſays*; * *There is a great deal of wiſdom requiſite to conſider both the ſtate of the Body, and of the Soul.* If a man, *ſaith he,* that is troubled in Conſcience, come to a Miniſter, it may be, he will look all to the Soul, and nothing to the Body; if he come to a Phyſician, he conſidereth the Body, and neglecteth the Soul: for my part, I would never have the Phyſician's Counſel deſpiſed, nor the Labour of the Miniſter negected; becauſe the Soul and Body dwelling together, it is convenient, that as the Soul ſhould be cured, by the Word, by Prayer, by Faſting, or by Comforting; ſo the Body muſt be brought into ſome temperature, by Phyſick, and Diet, by harmleſs Diverſions, and ſuch like ways; providing always, that it be ſo done in the fear of God, as not to think by theſe ordinary means quite to ſmother or evade our Troubles, but to uſe them as preparatives, whereby our Souls may be made more capable of the ſpiritual Methods that are to follow afterwards.

* *In his Comfort for Afflicted Conſciences,* p. 137.

Secondly,

Secondly, Look upon thoſe that are under this woful Diſeaſe of Melancholly with great pity and compaſſion. *And pity them the more, by conſidering that you your ſelves are in the body, and liable to the very ſame trouble; for how brisk, how ſanguine, and how chearful ſoever you be, yet you may meet with thoſe heavy Croſſes, thoſe long and painful and ſharp Afflictions which may ſink your ſpirits. Many that are far from being naturally inclined to Melancholly, have been accidentally overwhelmed with it, by the loſs of Children, by ſome ſudden and unlooked for diſappointment that ruines all their former Projects and Deſigns: O let every groan that you hear from perſons ſo afflicted, deeply affect your hearts; and never look upon them but with a compaſſionate and a concerned eye; never look upon them, but make this uſe to your ſelves.* Man at his beſt Eſtate is altogether vanity. *Let it wean you from the world, when you ſee that by ſuch a Diſeaſe as this, a man is quickly taken off of all his buſineſs, and unfit to manage his Affairs, or to purſue his former moſt delightful work.* Melancholly is a complication of violent and ſore Diſtreſſes; *'tis full of miſeries*; *'tis it ſelf* a fierce Affliction, *and brings to our Thoughts and to our Bodies one Evil faſt upon another:* II.

ther: Any other Diſtemper may trouble us, but this does aſtoniſh and amaze. O look upon your Friends in this caſe with great tenderneſs, for they, alas, are wounded both in Soul and Body; and in all the world there are none for the time in ſo doleful a ſtate as they: They are uſually walking as in the midſt of Fire and Brimſtone; and moſt frequently under the very pangs of death, and the pains of Hell; in great bodily danger, and in no leſs ſpiritual Calamity: Their Burthen is very often heavier than their groaning; their ſighs are deep, their hearts are ſunk, their minds are in a flame, and they are fallen very low: They are thinking on what is ſad and frightful, and they cannot baniſh thoſe Idea's that are ſo terrible. If you ſaw a perſon wounded, and torn and mangled on the High-way, the ſight of ſo deplorable an Object would fill you with compaſſion; the ſight of your Friends under this Diſeaſe which I am now ſpeaking of, ought much more to move you, for it is every moment tearing them to pieces; every moment it preys upon their Vitals, and they are continually dying, and yet cannot dye. When you viſit a Melancholly perſon, *make this Reflection. This Friend of mine awhile ago rejoyced in the love of God as I do; he met with me in Holy Aſſemblies,*

and

and ſung the Praiſes of the Moſt High *with as pleaſant a countenance, with as chearful an heart as I; and now he is in deſpair, and horror, and mourning; now his Viſage and his Language is changed, and he is all diſſolved in bitterneſs, and tears, and woe; Oh how vain a thing is man! how terrible is it to fall into the hands of the Living God! my poor Friend under a ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure does* never eat nor drink with pleaſure: *he is covered with ſadneſs, whilſt I rejoice in the Bleſſings of Providence; I will by this Example learn to improve my own mercies, and to have a great tenderneſs for ſuch as are brought ſo very low.* If, *(as Mr.* Peacock *in his diſtreſs ſaid)* you did but feel their grief for one hour, you would have great compaſſion on them; *every one of their tears and ſighs has this Language, in which the Poor afflicted* Job *ſpoke to his hard-hearted Viſiters,* chap. 19. 21. Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me!

Thirdly, Do not uſe harſh Speeches to your Friends when they are under the diſeaſe of Melancholly. *They may fret and perplex, and enrage them more, but* III.

they will never do them the leaſt good. Some indeed will adviſe you to chide and rebuke them upon all occaſions; but I dare confidently ſay, ſuch Adviſers never felt this Diſeaſe; for if they had, they would know that by ſuch a method they do but pour oyl into the flame, and chafe and exaſperate their wounds inſtead of healing them. Mr. Dod, *by reaſon of his mild, meek and merciful ſpirit, was reckoned one of the fitteſt perſons to deal with People thus afflicted. Never was any Miniſter more tender and compaſſionate, as thoſe will find that read the Account of Mr.* Peacock, *and Mrs.* Drake, *who by his means were very much revived. If you would be ſerviceable to ſuch Perſons, you muſt not vex them with harſh and rigorous diſcourſe: it cauſes many poor Souls to cheriſh and conceal their troubles to their greater torment, becauſe they meet with very harſh entertainment from thoſe to whom they have begun to explain their caſe. Our Bleſſed Lord, and Principal Phyſician, was meek and lowly, and would not* break the bruiſed Reed, nor quench the ſmoaking Flax. *And the firſt Viſit that the forementioned Mr.* Dod *made to Mr.* Peacock *in his Anguiſh, was to put him in mind of God's kindneſs, * whereof he ſhewed to him four parts.* 1. *To take ſmall*

* *See Mr.* Peacock's *Viſitation, p.* 6.

ſmall things in good part. 2. *To paſs by Infirmities.* 3. *To be eaſily entreated.* 4. *To be entreated for the greateſt. You muſt uſe with ſuch, a great deal of prudence and gentleneſs, not upon every occaſion to thwart and contradict them; with love you may do them much good, but in anger none at all: If you be ſevere in your ſpeeches, they'll never be perſuaded that it is in kindneſs, and ſo not regard at all what you ſay; nay, your ſharp words pierce as ſo many Daggers to their hearts, and make that inward Fever, that burns them, to be more hot and ſcorching: But of all Perſons,* Miniſters *are eſpecially to be blamed, who when they find poor Sinners even overwhelmed with a ſenſe of guilt, with the terrors of God, and ſlain by the Law, do ſtill ſet the Law more and more home upon them; which is indeed to throw them down lower, but not the way to raiſe them up; it is to widen and enflame, but not to remove and heal their wounds; and to ſuch that of the Prophet may be very juſtly applied,* Ezek. 34. 4. The diſeaſed have ye not ſtrengthned, neither have ye healed that which was ſick; neither have ye bound up that which was broken; neither have ye brought again that which was driven away; neither have ye ſought that which

was loſt, but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. *And then the poor diſtreſſed Soul is more diſtreſſed by their harſh Language, and is apt to conclude againſt it ſelf, and to ſay, If the Miniſters of Chriſt ſpeak ſo ſeverely to me, what will Chriſt himſelf do? and this is raking in the wounds that are already very ſore and ſmarting. Such a Miniſter is as an Angel that troubles the waters more, that were before troubled; but not an Angel of peace to bring glad tidings to a weary Soul. They would not complain no more than you, if they were not in violent anguiſh and perplexity. For as* Job *ſays*, ch. 6. 5. Doth the wild Aſs bray when he hath graſs? or loweth the Ox over his fodder? *And again, to the ſharp Expreſſions of his Friends, he ſays*, Job 16. 3, 4, 5. Miſerable Comforters are ye all! ſhall vain words have an end? I alſo could ſpeak as you do. If your ſoul were in my ſoul's ſtead, I could heap up words againſt you, and ſhake my head at you: But I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips ſhould aſſwage your grief. *When their Souls are already full of ſorrow, a little more will make them overflow. When they are weakned with ſeveral aſſaults, a ſmall ſtroke will throw them to the ground: and a Sore*

that

that is continually rubbed and chafed, cannot be cured. But of this I have ſpoken in the following Treatiſe, *p.* 80.

Fourthly, You muſt be ſo kind to your Friends under this Diſeaſe, as to believe what they ſay. *Or however, that their apprehenſions are ſuch as they tell you they are; do not you think that they are at eaſe when they ſay they are in pain. It is a fooliſh courſe which ſome take with their* melancholly Friends, *to anſwer all their Complaints and Moans with this,* That it's nothing but Fancy; *nothing but* Imagination and Whimſey. *It is a* Real Diſeaſe, *a* Real Miſery *that they are tormented with: and if it be Fancy, yet a diſeaſed Fancy is as great a Diſeaſe as any other; it fills them with anguiſh and tribulation: But this ſo diſordered Fancy is the conſequent of a greater Evil, and one of the ſad effects that are produced by that black Humour that has vitiated all the natural ſpirits. Theſe afflicted perſons can never poſſibly believe that you pity them, or that you are heartily concerned for them, if you do not credit what they ſay; and truly it often falls out, that becauſe Melancholly perſons do not always look very ill, or have pretty good ſtomachs, and do not at firſt very much decline* IV.

in their Bodies, other perſons that know nothing of the Diſtemper, are apt to think that they make themſelves worſe than they are: whereas, alas, they are ſo grieved, that they need not, neither will they counterfeit any more grief. In all other Evils people take for granted what others ſay, and accordingly ſympathiſe with them; but in this they are apt to contradict and oppoſe ſuch as are diſtreſſed; and as long as they do ſo, cannot pity them as they ought: This makes the grief of ſuch to overwhelm and ſtrangle them within, becauſe when they diſcloſe it, they find it is to no purpoſe; and do but in this caſe as you would have others do to you; ſuppoſe when you have the Toothach, or Headach, and people, when you complain, ſhould tell you 'tis nothing but Fancy, would not you think their carriage to be full of cruelty? and would it not vex you to find that you cannot be believed?

V. *Fifthly,* Do not urge your Friends under the Diſeaſe of Melancholly, to things which they cannot do. *They are as perſons whoſe bones are broken, and that are in great pain and anguiſh, and conſequently under an incapacity for action: their Diſeaſe is full of* perplexed tormenting thoughts; *if it were poſſible by any means inno-*

innocently to divert them, you would do them a great kindneſs; but by no means preſs them to any thing that requires more intenſe thinking; or that by fixing their minds, will force them to muſe and pore more; by the doing of which, they are already very miſerable: it puts them into a more anxious ferment, when you are continually fretting them with the doing of this or that, to which it may be they have no more power, than a man that hath broke his Leg, hath to run. Be not noiſy or clamorous with them; but know, that ſilence and quietneſs are moſt favourable to their deſolate Condition. You know that they are overwhelmed with ſorrows, and grief is a very unactive ſluggiſh thing; the vehemence of this, weakens the natural ſpirits, and blunts the Soul, and renders its conceptions very languiſhing, and confuſed. But perhaps you will ſay, Muſt we not urge them to hear the Word of God? *I anſwer, If they are ſo far gone in the Diſeaſe, as to be in continual unintermitting anguiſh, they are not capable of hearing, becauſe of the many great pains which they moſt frequently have at the ſame time: but if their Diſtemper is not yet come to ſuch a terrible height, you may indeed preſs them to hear, but at the ſame time you muſt uſe a great*

of prudence, and not perſuade them with too much peremptorineſs or vehemence; ſtrive to convince them of their duty by love, and by good words. In which caſe Jacob's *pace with his Flocks, with ſuch, is the beſt and ſafeſt way, to drive them gently, eſpecially ſeeing they are big with fear and perplexity: You may win much upon them by a mild, a ſweet and affable carriage; and if you imitate the Friends of Mrs.* Drake, *you will not do amiſs; and therefore I will mention their practiſe as I find it in her Life.* * *'The burthen with which ſhe had 'overloaded her ſelf was ſo great, that we 'never durſt add any thereunto, but fed her 'with all incouragements, ſhe being too apt 'to overcharge her ſelf, and to deſpair upon 'any addition of fewel unto that Fire which 'already was kindled in her: And ſo where-'ſoever ſhe went to hear, notice was ſtill gi-'ven, ſo to manage the buſineſs, that the Mi-'niſter might know that he had an Hearer 'thus qualified; and by this means ſhe re-'ceived no diſcouragement in hearing of the 'Word.*

* *See Mrs.* Drake *Revived, p.* 82.

VI. *Sixthly*, Do not attribute the effects of meer Diſeaſe, to the Devil; though I deny not that the Devil has an hand in the cauſing of ſeveral Diſeaſes: *The Envy and*

and rage that he is filled with, prompts him to diſturb the health and peace of men; and by God's permiſſion, no doubt, he brings a great many ſickneſſes upon them. As we know in the Caſe of *Job, he filled him all over with tormenting Sores, which brought the poor man into a very great* Melancholly, *and wofully by that means perplexed him with ſpiritual terror and amazement. But notwithſtanding all this, it is a very overwhelming thing, to attribute every action almoſt of a Melancholly man to the Devil, when there are ſome unavoidable Expreſſions of ſorrow which are* purely natural, *and which he cannot help, no more than any other ſick man can forbear to groan and ſigh. Many perſons will ſay to ſuch,* Why do you ſo pore and muſe, and gratify the Devil? *whereas it is the very nature of the Diſeaſe to cauſe ſuch fixed Muſings; and they may as well ſay,* Why are you diſeaſed? why will you not be well? *Their ſo muſing proceeds from a* violent preſſure on their ſpirits, *which they are not able to remove; ſome think that Melancholly perſons are pleaſed with their Diſtemper; but I verily believe, as little as a man that lies on thorns or bryars, or as one that is thrown into a fiery Furnace. It is vaſtly painful to them to be in this condition; and they cannot*

not be ſuppoſed ſo far to hate themſelves as to be fond of pain. The Devil is indeed very buſie to work during the darkneſs of a Soul; he throws in his Bombs, and his fiery Darts; to amaze us more when we are compaſſed with the Terrors of a diſmal Night, he is bold and undaunted in his Aſſaults, and injects with a quick and ſudden malice a thouſand monſtrous and abominable thoughts of God, and which at the ſame time ſeem to be the motions of our own minds, and ſo do moſt terribly grieve and trouble us. And alas, we too too often comply with his Deſigns; we are uſually then under great unbelief, and too often we think of God, and of our ſelves, as he would have us think: But yet if you be ſpeaking in every Action of Melancholly Perſons, that it is from this Evil Spirit, you will, as it is eaſie to fix any ſort of direful Impreſſions on ſuch as are overcome with fear, perſuade them, it may be, at length, that they are poſſeſt, and that all that they do, is from him, when at the ſame time they are pained in every part; and then finding themſelves unable to get out of their diſtreſs, your Diſcourſes plunge them very low in miſery. I would not have you to bring a Railing Accuſation againſt the Devil, *ſo as to attribute to him a thouſand things, wherein he has no hand at all; neither*

neither muſt you falſly accuſe your friends, by ſaying, that they gratify him, when they do not ſo: Conſider how ill you would take it, to be ſo uſed, if you were in their Caſe; or conſider, That to be without Temptation, is the greateſt Temptation.

Seventhly, Do not much wonder at any thing that they ſay or do. VII. *What will not people do that are in Deſpair! What will they not ſay, that think themſelves loſt for ever! What ſtrange extravagant Actions do you ſee thoſe do that are under the power of fear! And none are ſo much afraid as theſe poor people are; they are afraid of God, of Hell, and of their own ſorrows. You need not much wonder at them, when you know that even ſo great a Man as* Job *curſed his day, and talked of God with much more freedom and boldneſs than he ought to have done; and the* Lord *himſelf ſaid,* that he darkned Counſel by words without knowledg. *Do not think it ſtrange, if they very much complain, for their grief cauſes them to ſpeak; you know the Tongue will always be ſpeaking of the Aking Tooth. Their* ſoul is ſore vexed; *and tho it's true, they get no good by complaining; yet they cannot but complain, to find themſelves in ſuch a doleful Caſe: And tho they can ſay with*

with David, *Pſal. 6. 6.* I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to ſwim, I water my couch with tears; *yet they cannot forbear to groan and weep more, till their very eyes be conſumed with grief. Let no Carriage of theirs provoke you to* paſſion; *let no ſharp words of theirs make you to* talk ſharply: *Sick perſons are generally very peeviſh; and it will be a very great weakneſs in you, not to bear with them, when you ſee that a long and ſore diſeaſe hath deprived them of their former good Temper. Do not you find in Scripture ſeveral inſtances of Men that have uttered woful complaints? That have ſaid,* Their Hope was periſht? *That the* Wrath of God laid hard upon them? That againſt them his Terrors were ſet in array? That their Prayers were ſhut out? That their Iniquities were gone over their heads? *That they were as ſpectacles of Reproach, and the ſcorn and wonder of other Men? Do not therefore wonder at any thing that your Friends, under great trouble, ſay.*

VIII. *Eighthly,* Do not mention to them any formidable Things, nor tell, in their hearing, any ſad Stories; *becauſe they do already* Meditate Terror; *and by every ſad thing*

thing that they hear of, are much more terrified; their troubled Imagination is prepared to fix upon any mournful thing; and by that means, will multiply its own ſorrows. The hearing of ſad things, cauſes in them more violent Agitations, and throws them into great diſorders, having the ſame effects in them, that Storms and Thunder have in Nature, and which ſtrike a Terror into Men. You muſt know, that they are very ingenious in heightning every doleful thing; *And to argue thus, If it be ſo dreadful to be ſo cruelly uſed, ſo tormented, ſo enſlaved, How dreadful then is my condition, that have God againſt me, and am like to be in Hell for ever! Studiouſly avoid all Diſcourſe of what is* grievous *to them; and yet you muſt not be too merry before them neither; for then they think you ſlight their Miſeries, and have no pity for them. A mixture of affableneſs and gravity will ſuit their Condition beſt; and if I might adviſe, I would deſire Parents not to put thoſe Children, who are naturally Melancholly, to be Scholars, or to any Employment that requires much Study; for that will engage them perhaps to think too much, and at laſt they will be overwhelmed with uneaſie thoughts.*

Ninthly,

IX. *Ninthly*, Do not think it altogether needleſs to talk with them; *only when you do ſo*, do not ſpeak as if their Troubles would be very long: *It is the length of their Trouble that amazes them, when after one Week, or Month*, without Sleep, or Reſt, or Hope, *ſtill the next Week and Month is as painful and as terrible to them as the former was; and this many times puſhes them forward to ſeek to deſtroy themſelves, becauſe they ſee no period of their Miſeries, and their Anguiſh is both tedious and inſupportable. Some of the* Platoniſts *thought that a Man might diſlodge his ſoul by abſtracted contemplation, and turn it into the World of Spirits by the meer force of Thought; but this is nothing elſe but talk; for if any could ſo dye, none would more frequently do ſo than Melancholly Perſons, whoſe diſeaſe is earneſt, intenſe, undiverted thinking, and yet they cannot dye for all that: Of it ſelf, it very rarely kills any perſon. Revive them therefore, by telling them, that God can create deliverance for them in a moment; That he has often done ſo with others; That he can quickly cure their Diſeaſe, and ſhew them his Reconciled, Amiable Face, tho it has been hid from them for a long ſeaſon. You will convey to them ſome little ſupport by ſuch*

ſuch diſcourſe as this. Tell them, that it may be, in a little time their groans ſhall be turned into praiſes, and that God will ſatisfy them early with his Mercies, and make them glad according to the days wherein he hath afflicted them, and the years wherein they have ſeen evil. *Tho they are like the burning buſh, yet they ſhall not be conſumed; and that there ſhall be more ſweetneſs in the deliverance, than there was bitterneſs in the Croſs: And that hereafter they may have cauſe to ſay with* David, *Pſal.* 43. 4. I will go unto the Altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy. *And that it will make their joys more pleaſant, when they come after ſo long ſadneſs; as to a Man that hath laid all the Night long in Waking Pain, the Morning-Reſt is very ſweet: And let them remember, that the Greateſt Mourner in* Iſrael, *was* the ſweet Singer of *Iſrael. Pain, indeed, makes the Time ſeem to go on very ſlowly, an hour ſeems a day, and a day a week; but if you can, by the Bleſſing of God, give them any hope, that* they may once be delivered, *they will be ſenſibly refreſht, and will be enabled to Pray and Read; none of which they can do whileſt they are in deep Deſpair; but when you talk with them, you muſt, as I have ſaid before, by*

no

no means thwart, or contradict them, *but allow what they ſay; or taking for granted that what they ſay is true, then to proceed with what applications you think moſt proper to their Caſe upon ſuch a ſuppoſition; and if you think they were truely good people, and ſincere in their Converſation, before this woful diſtemper ſeized them, Let them know what you think, and that* you have charitable hopes of their Salvation, *however it ſhall pleaſe God to deal with them as to Temporal deliverance.*

X. *Tenthly*, Tell them of others who have been in ſuch Anguiſh, and under ſuch a terrible Diſtemper, and yet have been delivered. *It is very hard indeed to perſuade a perſon under great pain and anguiſh, and a ſenſe of the Wrath of God, and a fear of Hell, that ever any has heretofore been ſo perplext as he: Such generally think themſelves worſe than* Cain *or* Judas, *or any the moſt wicked People in the World, as thinking that their ſins have greater aggravations, and that conſequently they ſhall be more miſerable; but you may acquaint them with ſeveral inſtances of* God's Gracious dealing *with others, after they have been for many Months and Years*

Tears afflicted. I could ſend you to ſome now alive, that were long afflicted with Trouble of Mind, and Melancholly, as Mr. Roſewell, *and Mr.* Porter, *both Miniſters, the latter whereof was* ſix years *oppreſſed with this diſtemper; and now they both rejoyce in the Light of God's Countenance. I my ſelf was* near two years in great pain of Body, and greater pain of Soul, *and without any proſpect of peace, or help; and yet God hath revived me in his Soveraign Grace and Mercy; and there have been ſeveral heretofore ſorely perplex'd with great inward and outward trouble, whom God, after that, wonderfully refreſh'd. Mr.* Robert Bruce, *ſome time ago Miniſter at* Edinburgh, *was* Twenty years in terrors of Conſcience, *and yet delivered afterwards. You may alſo direct them to the Lives of Mrs.* Brettergh, *Mrs.* Drake, *Mr.* Peacock, *and Mrs.* Wight, *where they will ſee a very chearful day returning, after a black and ſtormy night; and that the Iſſue from their Afflictions, was more glorious than their Conflict was troubleſom;* They went forth weeping, they ſowed in Tears, but they reaped an Harveſt of wonderful Joys afterwards. *You have in the* Book of Martyrs, *written by Mr.* Fox,

an inſtance of Mr. Glover, *who was worn and conſumed with inward trouble for the ſpace of Five years, that he neither had any comfort in his Meat, nor any quietneſs of Sleep, nor any pleaſure of Life; he was ſo perplexed as if he had been* in the deepeſt Pit of Hell; *yet at laſt, this good Servant of God, after ſo ſharp temptations, and the ſtrong buffetings of Satan, was freed from all his trouble, and was thereby framed to great Mortification, and was like one already placed in Heaven, and led a Life altogether Celeſtial, abhorring in his mind all prophane things; and you have a remarkable inſtance of mighty joy in Mr.* Holland *a Miniſter, who having the day before he died, meditated upon the* 8*th of the* Romans, *he cried on a ſudden, Stay your Reading,* What brightneſs is it that I ſee! *They told him it was the Sun-ſhine: Nay, ſaith he,* my Saviour's ſhine. *Now,* farewell World, and welcome Heaven; *the day-ſtar from an high hath viſited my heart; O ſpeak it when I am gone, and let it be Preached at my Funeral,* God dealeth familiarly with Man. *I feel his Mercy, I ſee his Majeſty, whether in the Body, or out of the Body, God he knoweth, but I ſee things unutterable: And in the Morning*

ing following, he ſhut up his bleſſed Life, with theſe bleſſed words, O! what an happy change ſhall I make, from Night to Day, from Darkneſs to Light, from Death to Life, from Sorrow to Solace, from a factious World, to an Heavenly Being! *O! my dear Friends, it pitieth me to leave you behind; yet remember what I now feel, I hope you ſhall find ere you dye, That* God doth, and will deal familiarly with Men. *And now thou fiery Chariot, that came down to fetch up* Eliah, *carry me to my happy hold; and all the bleſſed Angels who attended the ſoul of* Lazarus, *to bring it up to Heaven, bear me, O bear me into the boſome of my beſt Beloved:* Amen, Amen. *Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.* And ſo he fell aſleep. *See this, and ſeveral other inſtances in Mr.* Robert Bolton's Inſtructions for afflicted Conſciences, *p.* 87. *and* 235, *&c.*

Eleventhly, The next kindneſs you are to ſhew to your Melancholly Friends, is heartily to pray for them. *Let your eyes weep for them in ſecret, and there let your ſouls melt in fervent holy Prayers; they are not able in a compoſed or a lively manner, to recommend their own Caſe to God; you may uſe many arguments in your Prayers,* XI.

their forlorn ſtate, and the greatneſs of their miſeries may be a very powerful motive to your Supplications: You know that none but God himſelf can help them. *For as Mr.* Greenham *ſays, If our aſſiſtance were as an Hoſt of Armed Soldiers, if our Friends were the Princes and Governors of the Earth, if our Poſſeſſions were as large as between the Eaſt and the Weſt, if our Meat were as Mannah from Heaven, if our Apparel were as coſtly as the Ephod of* Aaron; *if every day were as glorious as the day of Chriſt's Reſurrection; yet if our Minds are appalled with the Judgments of God, all theſe things would not yield us any help or conſolation* *. *And you muſt wreſtle with him on their behalf; you may plead with him, That his Power, and Goodneſs, will be more illuſtrious, if he ſave thoſe, whom none but he himſelf can ſave; and that his Grace will be more remarkable, if he pleaſe to create Peace for thoſe troubled Souls, in which none but he can make a Calm; and you know not but that his Light, on your requeſt, may begin to ſhine on thoſe who have bewailed his abſence with many dreadful groans: And tho your eyes be even weary with looking upwards, yet continue ſtill to wait and pray; for it ſhall not be in vain. Thus you will do them a great kindneſs, and per-*

* See Mr. Greenham's *Comfort for an Afflicted, Conſcience*, p. 27.

perform your own Duty, tho perhaps they may be ready to ſay to you, as Mr. Peacock *to his Friends*, Take not the Name of God in vain, by praying for a Reprobate. *And as Mr.* Dod *ſaid to him, when he ſaid* he could not pray, *Tho, ſaith he, moſt ſickneſſes hinder Prayer, and therefore the Apoſtle* James *ſays*, If any Man be ſick, let him ſend for the Elders, *&c.* Yet if God ſtir up your Friends to pray for you, he will ſtir up himſelf to hear their Prayers. *And do you conſider, that nothing but Prayer can do them good. It is an obſtinate diſeaſe, that nothing elſe will overcome; for it is a very ſlight Melancholly, and which is not deeply rooted, that can be drowned in Wine, or chaſed away with ſociable divertiſements. Some, indeed, tell us, When they find themſelves troubled, their way is to bid their thoughts* Battel, *and to oppoſe Thoughts againſt Thoughts, and with the dint of Reaſon, to ſubdue this peeviſh Humour: But ſuch muſt give me leave to ſay, That they are not under the diſeaſe of Melancholly; for that will neither hear Faith nor Reaſon, till God himſelf by his Almighty Power, work Salvation for us.*

XII. XII. Not only pray for them, but get other serious Christians to pray for them also. *When many good people join their requests together, the cry is more acceptable and prevalent. When those in the* Acts *joined to remember* Peter *in his Chains, he was after that very soon delivered, and in the very time of their Prayers. All believers have through Jesus Christ a great interest in Heaven; and the Father is willing to grant what they beg in the Name of his dear Son. I my self have been* greatly helped by the prayers *of others, and I heartily thank all those that kept any particular days wherein more solemnly to remember my distressed condition*; *blessed be God that has* not cast off their prayer, nor turned away his mercy from me. *Every day gives us several experiences of many that have been rescued from their diseases, their temptations, and their fears, by the Prayers of others. And I might also add, you have very great cause* to pray for your selves *that God may give you strength to bear so heavy a Cross, as you are afflicted with, in the afflictions of your friends. Their doleful complaints, their repeated groans, and their long and sore trials, are enough to sink you too, if God do not give you wonderful support. You have need to beg strong faith,*

and

and great patience, that you may not be unhinged with their paſſionate or haſty ſpeeches.

XIII. Put your poor Friends in mind of the Soveraign Grace of God in Jeſus Chriſt; *often put them in mind, that he is* merciful and gracious; *that* as far as the Heavens are above the Earth, ſo far are his thoughts *above their* thoughts; his thoughts of mercy and love, above their ſelf-condemning guilty thoughts. *Teach them as much as you can to look up to God by the Great Mediator, for Grace and ſtrength, and not too much to pore on their own ſouls, where there is ſo much darkneſs and unbelief. And ſeek to divert them from puzling themſelves too much with God's ſecret and unknown Decrees, and ſtrive to help them to believe in Chriſt, which is their certain duty; ſhew them what great ſinners God has pardoned, and how he is* merciful, becauſe he will be merciful; *finding motives to help them, from their very miſeries, and from his own gracious nature. Thus I find they dealt with Mrs.* Drake, *ſhe would ſend to ſeveral Miniſters to know, concealing her name,* Whether ſuch and ſuch a Creature, without Faith, Hope, Love to God or Man, hard-hearted, without natural affection, who XIII.

had rejected all means, nor could ſubmit to the ſame, yet might have any hope to go to Heaven? *And they returned for Anſwer, That ſuch like and much worſe (though as bad as* Manaſſeh) *might by the mercy of God be received into favour, converted and ſaved; which did much allay her trouble.* For, (ſaid ſhe) the Fountain of all my miſery hath been, that I ſought for that in the Law, which I ſhould have found in the Goſpel; and for that in my ſelf, which was only to be found in Chriſt.

See her Life, *pag.* 147.

This is what I thought neceſſary to ſay to you; and you will find, the courſe I have mentioned, being taken with your Friends, will do them no prejudice. I do not ſpeak only with borrowed expreſſions in this matter, nor without ſome experience. The mild and the gentle way of dealing, I know very well you'l find to be the beſt, and the way of roughneſs and ſeverity will but aggravate and increaſe their miſeries. And I deſire you that are yet healthful and chearful, to improve your health; for if ever this diſtemper ſeize you, you will be able to do nothing for your Souls or Bodies. You may have time, but ſuch will be your anguiſh, that you will not be able to do any thing to purpoſe in that time. This Book has a peculiar Relation to the diſtreſſes of the mind; for as to what concerns

concerns that bodily pain that I had with my inward trouble, I have largely ſhewed what it was in my Practical Diſcourſes on Sickneſs and Recovery, *that were publiſhed about a year ago. And what a mercy it is to have our afflictions ſanctified, and to* bear the yoak *in our Youth, I have explained in my Treatiſe of* Early Religion *lately publiſhed, which is peculiarly deſigned for* young people; *and if God bleſs it to their good, it may help them to avoid thoſe woful Terrors which many others have groaned under.*

I think I could in the compoſing of the following Book have uſed a little more exactneſs, had I ſet my ſelf ſtudiouſly to do ſo, and by that means it might have been more pleaſant to the Reader, but not ſo well have ſerved my deſign; for according to that old ſaying, Æger non quærit medicum Eloquentem ſed ſanantem. *A Phyſitian that can remove the diſeaſe, is more welcome to the ſick than one that can talk finely about it, but do him no good; and if the Cure be performed, 'tis no matter tho the potion was not extreamly ſweetned. I purpoſely avoided all pretence to a regular ſmoothneſs of ſtile, becauſe that the Ears of people in great affliction, are not ſo tender and ſo delicate as theirs are, who are*

in

in health. I know that the Age in which we live, is very curious and critical, and that the English Language *has been within a few years greatly poliſhed and improved; and Religion deſerves the beſt words we can find, wherewith to expreſs our thoughts. And in* Eccleſ. 12. 10. *'tis ſaid,* The Preacher ſought out acceptable words; *by which, I ſuppoſe, he means, words that were* grateful, as well as profitable. *I hope the Reader will not find either Bombaſt, or ſlovenlineſs in my expreſſions; and if in them there is not, as I do not pretend there is, an accompliſhed beauty, yet that at leaſt they are not all deformity. Whatever ſome perſons may ſay, I think it my duty to expreſs my thoughts not altogether in a neglected and a careleſs manner, ſo it be with plainneſs and clearneſs, and ſuch as may tend to edification. Tho I have not in the following Book given ſuch a particular relation of my Troubles, as perhaps the Readers may expect; yet I deſire them to take notice, that where ever I ſpeak of inward diſtreſs, as by a third perſon I there ſpeak what I my ſelf have felt. It is an obſervation of the Readers of St.* Cyprian, *that through all his Writings almoſt every word doth breathe* Martyrdom; *his Expreſſions are full of ſpirit and paſſion, as if he had writ them with*

with his blood, and conveyed the anguiſh of his ſufferings into his Writings: *If I had had the judgment and the Pen of ſo Eloquent a perſon, I might have much better deſcribed the ſadneſs of my caſe; but I am ſure nothing in the world could fully expreſs it, it was ſo very terrible, and the greatneſs of the danger does heighten the mercy of* God my deliverer, *to whoſe Grace and wonderful Salvation I owe my preſent peace and hope, to whom I will devote all my poor endeavours. That thoſe which I have uſed in the following Treatiſe may be ſerviceable to his Glory, your advantage, and the relief of your Melancholly Friends, and many others, as alſo to my own good, is the prayer of*

Your Hearty Adviſer,

London, Sept. 10. 1691.

TIMOTHY ROGERS.

The

The LETTERS *that were ſent from ſeveral Divines to the Author, are theſe following.*

LETTER I.

From Matching-Hall *in* Eſſex, *Nov.* 21. 1690.

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. . . . . *Sir*, I took the firſt opportunity to read your good Book; and beſides the many uſeful things which are there to be learned in detail, the general ſcope and occaſion of it did much affect me, partly with gratitude, partly with an awful fear, with the former, to conſider, how it might have been with me; with the latter, conſidering how it may be with me; I ſee in what others ſuffer, what I might have ſuffered; and what am I that God ſhould exempt me from the lot of others better than my ſelf? It is likely now it is over, you may have cauſe to ſay, That all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth; and the comforts that you have in the return of the morning after a night, like theirs that live under the Poles, may more than recompence all your ſorrows and pains. And God hath thereby fitted you to ſupport and

and comfort others from your own experience; yet it is a favour to be freed from such pains and terrors. *Those that go down to the Sea in Ships, and do business in great waters, see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep*; but when he commandeth and raiseth up the stormy wind, which lifteth up *the waves thereof, they mount up to Heaven, they go down again to the depths, their soul is melted because of trouble, and they are at their wits end*; so that many would be afraid to purchase their experience so dear, or to venture to Sea in a storm, tho they might with pleasure relate their adventures, when the danger is over. Some have a smooth and even way through the world, while others are like those that go over *Salisbury Plain*, or some such place, where they have sometimes a clear prospect of the City, and their way to it, when they get upon the high ground; but when they are down in a valley, quite lose the sight of it, and may fear they shall never find the way to it: Some by a *fiducia perfugii*, keep on a fair and softly pace towards Heaven, and never have any experience, either of the ravishing joys, or amazing terrors of others, who are sometimes lift up to Heaven in ravishing comforts, and sometimes cast down to Hell with fears and terrors. But tho, through the mercy of God, I have had a safe and easie passage hitherto through the world, I know not what storms I may meet with before I get into harbor. I remember that great man Mr. *Marshal*, (of whom we were lately speaking) told me not long before he died, That through the mercy of God he had much peace and quietness in his own

own mind, tho he was not acquainted with the raviſhing joys which others felt, but knew not how it would be with him before he came to die, he did depend upon God, and was at his mercy not only for his Salvation, but for the comfort and aſſurance of it. Many charge the Doctrine of Aſſurance and Perſeverance, as tending to licentiouſneſs, and emboldening men to ſin; but if there were nothing elſe to be ſaid in the caſe, thoſe terrors which they who are ſure to go to Heaven, may here fall under, are ſufficient to check mens boldneſs and preſumption; if I were ſure that what I eat would not preſently kill me, yet if I knew that it would moſt likely breed the Gout, or the Stone, I ſhould forbear it. Tho God may not ſend us to Hell, he may bring Hell to us, and make us feel the anticipations of it in our Conſciences; *who knows the power of his wrath?* Or who can endure his terrors, if he run upon us like a Giant, take us by the neck, and ſhake us to pieces! We have need to pray, that *he may not be a terror to us in the day of evil*; we are always at his mercy, and depend upon him for the comfort and evidence of Grace, as well as for the habit and exerciſe of it. *If he give quietneſs, none can cauſe trouble; but if he hide his face, who can behold him!* I have ſometime been on a mountain in the skirts of the *Alpes*, when one while we have had the Sun ſhining out clear, and preſently a Cloud hath come, and we have been as in a thick miſt, and could not ſee a ſtep before us. God when he pleaſes, can hold us as over the bottomleſs pit, as ſome will hold Children over ſome dangerous

place

place to affright them; he can keep our minds intent upon our ſin, ſo as it ſhall be ever before us; he can ſuffer our judgments to be ſo clouded, that we ſhall have ſuch dark apprehenſions of things, as to look upon thoſe evidences which we have ſtored up againſt an evil day, as ſelf-deceivings and deluſions; he can let Satan looſe upon us to diſpute us out of all our hopes; he can make our hearts ſoft, ſo as our fears and troubles ſhall make a ſenſible impreſſion upon us, and be as an heavy burden upon a galled back. He can bring our ſouls to the grave, and our lives to the deſtroyers, ſetting us upon the very borders of Eternity, ſo as we cannot relieve our ſelves, by putting far from us the evil day. And thus he deals ſometimes with ſuch as are to him as the apple of his eye; he uſes his Soveraignty in diſtributing both comforts and terrors; but an humble ſubmiſſion and reſignation of our ſelves to his good will and pleaſure, will be the beſt means to prevent ſuch ſtorms, or at leaſt the beſt poſture for them to find us in. I am

Your Real Friend

Hen. Lukin.

LET-

LETTER II.

From *Siſſafernes* in *Hartfordſhire*, *Nov.* 4. 1690.

Dear Sir,

I Have Read your *Practical Treatiſe upon Sickneſs and Recovery*, which you have lately publiſhed to the World, and am glad to find ſo Univerſal and deep a ſenſe of the goodneſs of God, manifeſted in your own wonderful and late return to the Miniſtry, as is expreſt in thoſe Lines, which I take as a real Copy, tranſcribed from the Original in your inward Parts. I hope Grace, Mercy, and Truth, will keep you, and preſerve alive thoſe ſparks of Zeal in your Soul, to fly always upwards to God, which have been kindled by him. If the Lord ſhines forth more clearly and influentially upon you after ſo black a Cloud, I queſtion not but the Light of His Countenance will make amends for the Darkneſs you lay under. The moſt violent Storms can never beat off the Loving-kindneſs of the Lord from *One* of his, tho' ſometimes, in the deep Waters, all hopes of being ſaved may be taken away by them. Bleſſed be the Lord, that threw out a Plank to ſave you in a time of need, and ſecured you comfortably upon dry Land, when you thought of nothing but of being Shipwrack'd, and ſwallowed up in the deepeſt Mire. You have found a Rock, when you fear'd a Gulf; and may ſtand upon one that is higher than you, when you had

been

been carried ſo near unto the Land of forgetfulneſs, that God ſeemed to be juſt a laying you in the loweſt Pit, in Darkneſs, in the Deeps, with his Wrath lying hard upon you, and afflicting you with all his Waves. Doubtleſs God hath thus cloathed you with the Garment of Salvation, that you may encourage others to put on Chriſt, tho Hell be naked before them, and deſtruction hath no covering from thoſe that are not hid in him. God hath emptied you of your own Fulneſs, that you may be filled with *Him that filleth all in all.* You have been taught, even under Judgment, to ſing of Mercy; and in every part of Salvation, to cry, *Grace, Grace,* unto it; having ſeen that his Grace is ſufficient for you. He hath given you a Sip of Wrath, that the Cup of your Conſolation may drink the ſweeter, and that you may taſt the more, how good the Lord is, that would not leave you to take up the Full Draught, or wring out the Dregs in your Cup of Bitterneſs and Aſtoniſhment to all Eternity. I deſire to adore the Divine Goodneſs on your behalf, that he hath viſited you with his own Preſence, tho he had *his way in the whirlwind, and in the ſtorm,* when he came unto you. I bleſs the unſearchable Riches of his Grace in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that he hath ſhed abroad any ſenſe of his Love upon your Soul, who had poured ſo much of his diſpleaſure forth, that you complain of his Anger in every ſtroke of the Rod of God upon you. I rejoyce abundantly, that he hath bowed his ear unto Prayer for you, when you thought he had bent his Bow like an Enemy; that he hath

botled up your Tears, when your Roarings were poured forth like the Waters; that God hath form'd you into a Veſſel of Mercy, when you thought he had ſlung you away as a Veſſel wherein is no Pleaſure. In a word, I rejoyce with comfort and enlargements, that the Lord hath given us ſo good hopes through Grace, that you are Sealed up unto the Day of Redemption, who did once mournfully expreſs it in my own Hearing, That you were Sealed up unto the Black Day of Wrath, and ſhould not ſee me until the Heavens were no more. No more at preſent, but my Hearty Requeſts at the Throne of Grace, That He, who hath been the Author of your Faith, may become the finiſher of the ſame, and confirm you unto the End, till an Abundant Entrance (through the Broad Gate of Aſſurance) be adminiſtred unto you into the everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. I am,

SIR,

Your Affectionate Friend,

Servant, and Brother in the Lord,

J. HUSSEY.

LET-

LETTER III.

Dear Brother,

AS the tidings of your Diſtemper affected my Soul, and drew out my heart to make requeſt unto God for you; ſo the tidings of your deliverance from trouble, confirmed by ſo evident a demonſtration of it as your appearance both in the Pulpit and Preſs, hath much affected me with joy and thankfulneſs to the Lord. In your Book I read the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God in his ſevereſt dealings with his afflicted Servants, and the accompliſhing of what *Job* ſpeaks, *That when he hath tried them, he brings them forth as gold*; you have not been in the Furnace in vain; but to humble and prove you, and do you good in the end: O how good is God! good in himſelf, good and kind to all his Creatures, but eſpecially good to *Iſrael*. You have had abundant experience of it; he hath upheld you when falling, and raiſed you up when you was bowed down; and *hath turned for you your mourning into dancing; hath put off your ſackcloth, and girded you with gladneſs, that your ſoul may ſing praiſe unto him, and not be ſilent*; and you have well done in making ſo publick an acknowledgement of your thankfulneſs to God; that as deliverance hath been granted at the requeſt of many, ſo by the many who have been concerned for you, thanks may be given unto the Lord on your behalf. I am perſuaded the Lord hath taught you the truth

of that, *(viz.) That the School of the Croſs is the School of Light.* You had not known ſo well, either your own vanity, or the Vanity of the Creature, and of all humane help; nor the marvellous loving-kindneſs of the Lord in ſtepping in betwixt the Bridge and the Water many times for your help, had you not learned theſe things by being in the School of Affliction; and I am encouraged to believe, that the Lord hath reſerved you, and reſtored you, that you may be, through his Grace, greatly inſtrumental for the glory of his Name, in turning many to righteouſneſs; the moſt eminent Servants in the Lord's work have been prepared for it by manifold temptations; our *Bleſſed Redeemer himſelf was tempted, that he might be able to ſuccour thoſe who are tempted; and the Lord comforts his Servants in all their tribulations, that they might comfort others with the ſame comfort wherewith they have been comforted of God*; the Lord hath brought you out of the depths of diſtreſs, that you may be the more skilful Pilot to lead others through the Waves and Billows which they are afraid will ſwallow them up. Now, Dear Brother, What doth the Lord require of you, but what *Paul* ſets before young *Timothy?* 1 Tim. 4. 12. *Be you an example to Believers, in word, in converſation, in charity, in ſpirit, in faith, in purity, your ſound ſpeech, holy converſe, fervent love, and ſpiritual mindedneſs*; rightly improving ſpiritual Gifts, both in ſincere profeſſing and publiſhing of the truth; and unſpotted purity of life, will be a ſpeaking Rule to others, and ſo adorn both your Perſon and Profeſſion, that it will appear

you

you have been with Jesus, and that the Life of Christ doth shine forth in you. And that you may be long a shining and burning Light in this World, and at last be abundantly recompenced with the Reward promised to the Wise and Faithful, is the fervent desire and prayer of

York, *Nov.* 6. 1690.

Your Unworthy, but Affectionate Brother in the service of the Gospel,

RALPH WARD.

LETTER IV.

From Steeple *in* Dorsetshire, *May* 1. 1691.

My Dear Friend,

I Did hope, when I was last in *London*, to have had the satisfaction of a free and large Conversation with your self; and to have discours'd some particular matters with you; but I was unhappily defeated. I am now at too great a distance to use so much freedom with you, as some of my Circumstances would prompt me to, if I were placed so near you, as would admit of my waiting on you personally. But tho I do not think it proper to desire satisfaction from you by Letter about some things, which would be of great use to my self, and about which I believe you can better resolve me than other of my Acquaintance; yet if it be

consistent with your conveniences, I would be glad that you and I might maintain a correspondence sometimes by writing. I heartily bless God for his gracious dealings with you, and for the good, I hope, he hath done me, by what you have published to the World. I have found my self obliged frequently to peruse your Book; and the oftner I do read it, the more I am affected with it. I heartily wish, English People might become so sensible of their great concernment, that you might have encouragement to publish what you intimate in your Preface you did design. It is what I earnestly long to see, and what I am persuaded would be of singular use, if people were a little awakened out of their Lethargick Distemper. Peradventure God will use it to rouze and awaken many, who otherwise will sleep on, and continue in their doleful regardlesness and formality. It would greatly rejoice me to understand by a line or two from you, that I have some ground to hope to see that Tract in Print. The Lord preserve his faithful Messengers, and arm them against Discouragements. Remember *Eccles.* 11. 1, & 6. I am,

Your Affectionate Friend,

SA. BOLD.

LET-

LETTER V.

Dear Mr. Rogers,

SIR, I thank you for your Diſcourſes on Sickneſs and Recovery; I truſt, that God that hath given you (as it were) a reſurrection from the dead, hath deſigned you for more than ordinary work in your Generation. Your Deliverance and Salvation has been extraordinary; and 'tis more than probable, that ſo muſt your After-work be. God, who gives to his Servants the Talents of Gifts or Graces, will find imployment for them anſwerable unto the ſame. I long to ſee ſomething you hint in your Epiſtle before your Book, about your ſpiritual Conflict under your bodily Affliction; It will be, I hope, of uſe to all tender afflicted Conſciences. I have bleſſed the Lord on your behalf, for his ſignal favour ſhown you in your wonderful recovery. And ſhall pray to God for you, That he will pleaſe to continue your life, health, and opportunities to you, that you may be eminently uſeful in your Miniſterial Capacity for his Name. Your dear Parents would have rejoyced (if they had been alive) to have heard and ſeen the fruits of your Labours. Dear Sir, though I am a little ſtraitned for time at preſent, yet my heart is inlarged towards you; wiſhing you all health and happineſs in this World, and in the next, Eternal Felicity. I am,

From Hudleskeugh *in* Cumberland, Apr. 17. 1691.

Dear Sir,
Your unfeigned Well-wiſher and Servant,
GEO. NICHOLSON.

LETTER VI.

Dear Sir,

IT was your ſignal happineſs to be deeply writ upon the hearts of many of God's praying Servants, when in your own apprehenſion you ſeemed as if you had been caſt out of God's heart: And I heard ſome, when you were at your loweſt ebb, expreſs their faith and hope, That God was but preparing you by thoſe afflictive Methods for more eminent Service. And now it cannot but greatly rejoice me, to ſee ſuch blooming appearances of the Iſſue anſwering both their Prayers and Hopes. Miniſters, of all Perſons, had need to ſet up upon a good ſtock of Experience, ſpiritual and uſeful Experience! And no School more proper to improve us in that kind, than the School of Affliction; which made *Luther* ſometimes ſay, That *Affliction, Temptation and Prayer, were the three Things that made a Miniſter.* And hence it is, that God in his wiſe and holy Providence, many times puts his Servants to School under the preparatory Pedagogy of Affliction, whom he deſigns for more than ordinary uſefulneſs. When we enter upon the ſervice of Souls, we know not what Caſes may occur, to require our wiſe and tender management: And a *Scribe* cannot be better inſtructed for the Kingdom of God, than when he has felt in himſelf what he meets with in others. When we have been brought to the mouth of the Pit our ſelves, and there have been

been conſcious to the thoughts and fears, and workings of our own hearts, we can better tell how to miniſter proper applications to others in the like condition. When we have our ſelves been toſs'd upon the tumultuous waves of temptation, and *one deep has call'd to another*, to put the greateſt diſcouragement upon our condition, we are the better furniſh'd to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to others under the like circumſtances. Every Storm weathered, furniſhes the Pilot with more dextrous skill, not only to work his own Veſſel in ſucceeding Tempeſts, but to be ſingularly helpful to others, when they fall into the like depths and Straits. *Our Bleſſed Lord* himſelf *learned experience by the things which he ſuffered:* And if he muſt be put to School to lead him into a practical experience of what he was to pity and help in others; How much more is it requiſite in ſuch poor unskilful Creatures as we! A Wiſe and Holy God has been hewing you upon the dark Mountains; and I hope it has been to make you a more expert and polite Pillar in his Sanctuary: And the more workmanſhip he has beſtowed upon you, the more eminent Station probably he deſigns for you. God works his greateſt works many times in the dark, and forms his moſt curious Pieces in the gloomy ſhades of Adverſity; ſo that neither our ſelves, nor others, can tell what he is a-doing, till he hath accompliſh'd his Work. He throws us into the Furnace, Lead or Iron, and for a long time no body can tell what he will make of us: Sometimes he looks as if he would conſume, and make an utter end of us:

And

And yet at last he brings us forth as Gold. We go into the Fire light, and foolish, and frothy; and when he has melted and tried us, what time he sees meet, he brings us forth serious, holy and gracious Souls. When we thought we should have lost Life, and Soul, and All, we have lost nothing but our dross and feculency, to make us more refined for Temple-service. When you seriously reflect upon your by-past days of trouble, whatever thoughts you had then, yet, I hope, now you can say through grace, that God has made you no loser, but a blessed gainer by that gloomy dispensation. And what wisdom, and grace, and experience you have obtained, I pray God you may be helped humbly to imploy in his Holy Sanctuary. We should labour to diffuse a more shining and burning Light, when God has been trimming us from our dross and filth, and has set us up again in his Temple-Candlestick. God has been dressing and trimming you a long time; and after a long and dismal time of complicated affliction, he has restored you to your station in the Assemblies of his People: Now the good Lord make both your gifts and graces so much the more resplendent, not only for your own sake, but also that you may minister the more light and warmth to others in their way to glory. You promise a Second Volume of Discourses, giving account of the spiritual part of your Affliction, which I shall be very glad to see, as soon as your leisure will permit you to make it publick. In the mean time I commend you to God, and to the riches of his Grace, in hopes

hopes that what God has done for you, is but a pledge of what he deſigns to do by you. To which I ſhall only add my earneſt Prayers, and tell you, That it is in all ſincerity.

SIR,

Leeds, *Nov.* 25. 1690.

Your affectionate Fellow-labourer in the Work of the Goſpel,

THO. WHITAKER.

LETTER VII.

SIR,

I Do now at laſt return you my hearty thanks for your Book; . . . . . .

. . . . . .

I ſhould not have been thus far behind in expreſſing my gratitude, but that I have been hindred by weakneſs: . . . . . .

. . . . . .

It was a Book to me both ſeaſonable and ſuitable; I pray God it may be as well improv'd, as 'tis generally liked by Chriſtians. If I were to give an account of my Viſitation, it would in very many things correſpond with yours. I have been for ſome years paſt under an Hypochondraical evil habit of body, which has had many grievous Symptons attending it; *viz.* Vertigo's, Convulſions, Paralytick Effects, with a Fever, thought to be Hectical; and with it

it I have had an universal languor and decay of Spirits; together with dreadful Temptations, Clouds, Confusions and Terrors of Soul, *&c.* so that there was no hope, or help to be expected, but from Heaven, in answer to many Prayers, which (through mercy) were successful; . . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . though still I am under weakness; though I hope rather going forward, than contrary. As to my Soul, I have not been without good experiences (blessed be the free Grace of God!) I cannot, neither may I trouble you, to enlarge upon any of these things. My old Enemy will not lay down but by force; strong Temptations and Corruptions, *&c.* are my daily Exercise: Good Sir, help me by your Prayers over to the Lord Jesus; there's as much in that, as if I had made more words; Pray Sir, forget me not, and please to put others in remembrance of me; you know what Graces are necessary to such a Condition. 'Tis a true saying, *Tranquillus Deus, tranquillat omnia*; the Lord teach me to be as humble as he would have me be; and in every thing give thanks. I desire to rejoice with you, and them that rejoice concerning you, for your restauration. Good Sir, again remember them that are still out in the storm; such have need of patience, *&c.* I know not how to break off. But time and strength failing me, I remain,

Daventry,
March 10.
169⅞.

SIR,
Your Friend and Servant,
Joh. Worth, *Jun.*

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

From a Young Student in Divinity.

Dear and much reſpected Couſin,

LOng Experience proves it, beyond a thouſand Arguments, that they who have made choice of God for their happineſs, muſt expect none here; 'tis a contradiction to expect Heaven on Earth, or to look for a ſetled duration where all things ruſh round in viciſſitude. I cannot tell what they may find who have the world at will; but I am ſure Believers, upon a reflection and conſideration of the hard uſage, and unquieting perplexities which they are ſtill meeting with, cannot but long to be where the weary are at reſt. The Saints who have now got to the end of their way, may well rejoyce, for they have good reaſon for it: happy are they who have got ſafely to their Father's Houſe through ſo many threatning Difficulties. When others are lawleſs as to their practices, we are limited to the holy Rule of the Word; our life muſt be a life of Self-denial, mortification, and contempt of the World. I know not what thoughts many Profeſſors may have of Religion; but for my ſelf, when I ſeriouſly think what a life a true Chriſtian's is, I am ready to cry out, True Religion is a rare thing! Dear Couſin, What manner of men ſhould you and I be, who are deſigned for ſuch ſpecial work! I deſire to bear part in the praiſes for your wonderful Deliverance;

liverance; the Lord teach us the true nature of Thankfulneſs, that we may live more to, and for God. . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . I deſire an intereſt in your Prayers, that God would keep me from Melancholly, which I am inclined to; and that God would bleſs my ſtudy to me, and make it ſucceſsful; and in ſo doing, you will add one more to the Favours you have beſtow'd on

Rauthmell *in Yorkshire*, Novemb. 17. 1690.

Your very Loving Couſin,

THO. BARNS.

LETTER IX.

To a Relation of the Author's who was long under Melancholly, from a Miniſter who ſeveral years was under that Diſeaſe.

My dear Chriſtian Friend,

AS Chriſt has given me any bowels of mercy, I cannot but pity you under your Soul-affliction, and diſquietment of ſpirit, being greatly oppreſſed by Satan, that malicious and active Spirit, who hates you for the Truth's ſake; and (no doubt) therefore hates you, becauſe he finds in you the love of the truth, by the proper and convincing evidences of it; And that you might not have any comfort by it, as the

the work of the Spirit of Grace in your heart, as alſo that God might not have from you the praiſe and glory due unto his Grace for it, (for he envies him all the worſhip and glory that's given him by his Saints in Heaven and Earth.) Therefore he does all he can to hide the knowledge of it from you, by clouding your mind, by darkning your evidences by his own malicious ſuggeſtions againſt you, as alſo by ſtirring up all ſorts of ſin in you, but more eſpecially Unbelief, the ſin of ſins, his Firſt-born, the Mother of all Abominations in the Soul, and ſo the Provocative; whereby, he well knows, if he can work it up to its perfect and full dominion, he ſhall effectually hinder the income of all peace and joy, and ſo fill the poor deſpairing Soul with all heavineſs and horror, never to be removed but by faith, and its actings on Jeſus Chriſt, the King of Righteouſneſs, and the King of Peace. I beſeech you therefore (Dear Siſter, and the Lord himſelf work it in you!) turn away your mind from all the malicious, deceitful, lying Suggeſtions of the Adverſary, whom you know, by the Scripture of Truth, to be *a Lyar and a Murtherer from the beginning*; and will do all that he can to beguile you of the Grace of God in you, as alſo of all that mercy, pardon and peace, which God has provided in his Son, for all believing, broken-hearted Sinners, ſuch as (I doubt not) you are, whatever you may ſeem to your ſelf in your preſent darkneſs, and hour of temptation. Turn your ſelf (yea the Lord do it for you, and in you;) from him, to your Saviour, who will not accuſe

cuſe you with the Father, as he does; but is pleading his Sufferings, and preſenting his Blood and Atonement made thereby, for you: Look to him (dear Siſter) look to him, whom you ſhall find to be as the true Brazen Serpent to your love-ſick Soul, which has been ſore wounded by that fiery-flying Serpent, and old Dragon; but your Lord has overcome him by death, and you alſo (I doubt not) have overcome him in divers Combats and Temptations already, and ſhall overcome him fully and finally by the Faith of your mighty Redeemer, and the Captain of your Salvation; who, as he is able to ſave you to the utmoſt, ſo I doubt not, he will do it, whatever your Doubts and Fears may be at preſent. He is with you, taking care of your Soul, and all its Concerns, though your eyes are withheld, that you cannot diſcern him, as it was ſometimes with the Apoſtles themſelves; but he will ere long manifeſt himſelf to you, and then you ſhall know and acknowledge alſo, That he has born with you, and will be with you for ever; even as I now do, though I were as much to ſeek for his gracious preſence with me, as you are, or can well be. The Lord himſelf, even our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, work this very thing in you, and cauſe you *to hold faſt your confidence firm unto the end*; and you ſhall find, that it has great recompence of reward, as the Apoſtles has teſtified to the *Hebrews*; For he that ſhall come, will come, and will not tarry: He will not only come to Judgment at the laſt day; but he will come to you in the Spirit, and judge for your

your Soul againſt your Enemies, to deliver you from all, even Sin (which is ſuch a burthen to you;) As alſo from Satan, the great Troubler of your peace, who does either accuſe you falſly, or aggravates all your Infirmities and Miſcarriages, though ſuch as he has tempted you to, above all reaſon. I ſhall be glad to have ſome account from you, how it is with your Soul; . . . . . I ſhall endeavour (what lies in me, as enabled by the Spirit of Chriſt) to be a helper to your faith and joy. . . . . I ſhall add no more at this time, but only to let you know, That I have you, and others in your condition, daily in my prayers; ſo I commend you to the mercy of God in our dear Redeemer, I am,

Your very affectionate Friend, and Brother in Chriſt,

Febr. 21. $168\frac{8}{9}$.

GEORGE PORTER.

LETTER II.

Written to a Relation of the Author's, by one that had been under Melancholly.

Mrs. *Rogers*,

IF you dare believe one that hath been in your Caſe (which I confeſs is very ſad, and much to be pitied) you have very much of a

Bodily diſtemper, and tho, by reaſon of your Clouds, you cannot hope for relief, either by ſpiritual or natural means, yet know, that nothing is too hard for God to do; uſe both, and look up to God, as well as you can, for a Bleſſing: *The Lord's arm is not ſhortned that he cannot ſave; nor his ear heavy, that he cannot hear.* And tho your Sins, and ſad Apprehenſions, keep you in ſadneſs, that you cannot ſee the Lord Jeſus, nor call him yours, yet he ſees you bemoaning your Miſery and Diſability to love and ſerve him. I know you would give all the World, were it at your diſpoſal, for a glimpſe of this favour. Do not ſide with your Enemy ſo far, as to believe that you would not accept of the Lord Jeſus to be your King, as willingly as to be your Saviour; If you can get ſo much ground of your ſelf, then judge you are not alone in this, for thoſe that have been in deep Melancholly, have not only had hard thoughts of themſelves, but hard and ſinful thoughts of God, as if he delighted in the death of a Sinner (although he hath ſworn the contrary.) In that diſmal condition they could not ſee the lovelineſs of Chriſt, nor hardly diſcern deſires after him, unleſs only to be ſaved from Hell; they could plead againſt themſelves, That their Day of Grace was paſt, and that they had ſinned the unpardonable ſin, and that for ſeveral years. Much more I could ſay, but I know it is to no purpoſe, none can ſpeak to the heart, but God alone; only I beg of you to cheriſh that hope you have, which the Devil would have you diſown; but had you none, you would not

not ask any to pray for you. I knew one that was in ſo deſpairing a Condition that did not that; nor believed it more poſſible to be ſaved, than the Devil: At length was perſuaded to uſe a Steel Courſe, and Drink the Waters, and other means, which, by God's Bleſſing, did good; and as the bodily diſtemper wore off, more clearneſs came into the Mind, and hope returned, which before ſeemed to be quite dead; and tho the Party ſtill hath Clouds, ...

and Satan is apt to put in, that all is naught ſtill, through God's Mercy, the poor creature can reply, I am changeable in my frame, God is unchangeable in his Covenants. Tho I cannot find the ſenſible joy, nor love, nor delight that I would; yet bleſſed be God that he inables me to wait on him, in the uſe of the means, by which he hath promiſed to renew my ſtrength; and tho I want that ſweet ſenſible Communion with God, which is the Life of Heaven, Is it not a Mercy that I can hope in his Mercy? Have I deſerved ſuch high favours, that I muſt be always full of Joy! This is what I would; but if the Lord will keep me a poor Beggar, 'tis infinite Mercy that I am not in Hell; and that the deſire of my heart is after him, I chuſe to love him, I caſt my ſelf on him, I neither expect nor deſire any other Saviour; if I periſh, it ſhall be in ſerving him as well as I can, and let him do his will: *There is forgiveneſs with him, that he ſhould be feared.* This poor Creature often thinks of that Scripture, when Chriſt ſpoke to *Thomas*, *Thou ſeeſt and believeſt*,

lieveſt, bleſſed are they that do not ſee, yet believe. You ſay this is no Comfort to you, it is not your Caſe; true, but you know not how ſoon it may be: This Party that I ſpeak of, was in your Caſe, and I verily believe in worſe; therefore, pray caſt not off your confidence, the Lord I verily hope will ſhew you Mercy: But you muſt wait; be not impatient; Is not Redemption from Hell, and hope of Heaven worth waiting for? . . . .

The Lord ſhine in upon your Soul, and let you ſee, that whatever he doth is in love and faithfulneſs. Pray for me, that I may not forget how it hath been with, nor be inſenſible of your Condition, or others in your caſe. . . . . .

. . . I am in ſome ſmall manner ſenſible of your trouble, I wiſh I were abundantly more ſo; for then I ſhould hope to be hereafter, a partaker with you in your Joys.

July 24. 89.

LETTER III.

To a Relation of the Author's.

MY very kind, and dear Friend, whom I much reſpect and love in the Lord, even as I have Cauſe; having found you to be one, who (I am perſuaded) Love the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity; which you have fully manifeſted by your longings after him, and your great inward ſorrow, when you could not enjoy him as you would: And now he is returned unto you,

you, your ſoul is at reſt, rejoycing in him, as the Lord your Righteouſneſs, Peace, and Life, in whom you have all your ſoul needs and deſires. And the Lord manifeſt himſelf to you more and more, and fill you with abundance of Peace and Joy in Believing; which (I doubt not) you deſire for this end, That his Joy being your Strength, and your Heart enlarged by it, you may be able to run the ways of his Commandments, and to ſerve him not only in ſincerity, but with all gladneſs, in all love and thankfulneſs, for all his loving-kindneſs, and all the great things he has done for your ſoul, in bringing it out of that horrible pit of darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death, wherein you ſaw neither Sun, nor Moon, nor Stars, but were afflicted, toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted; without all light, comfort and joy; tho the Father of Lights, and the God of all Conſolation were with you, when you perceived him not, and could diſcover no tokens of his Gracious Preſence, as neither could I, in the like gloomy Condition: But I now find, as you alſo do, bleſſed be the Father of Mercies, That he was ready at hand, to give forth Light and Joy, when his own ſet time came; which tho we did not wait for in a due manner, by Faith, Patience, and Humility, yet he paſſed by all our unbelief, impatience, and peeviſhneſs, and viſited our ſinful Souls, in his tender Mercy, notwithſtanding all whereby we had provoked him, to turn his ſhort withdrawing from us, into an everlaſting departure from us, and have left us wholly to the unbe-

lief and frowardneſs of our own evil hearts: Wherefore, let us magnify his Name together, and let his high praiſes be in our hearts and mouths as long as we live, and unto all Eternity; for he is moſt worthy to be praiſed: And bleſſed be his Name for ever and ever, *Amen*. And let us walk circumſpectly and humbly with him all our days, that we grieve not his good Spirit any more, and provoke him to withdraw from us, and to take his bleſſed influences and comforts from us, as he has done. He is the life of our ſouls, and the joy of our hearts; without him, we are but a ſink of all filth, and a hell of ſorrow and confuſion. . . . .

. . . . . .

I hope you will give me the contentment, to let me ſee you as oft as you can; I ſhall be glad to be a means to help forward your Faith and Joy, unto a more full ſettlement of Spirit, and more abundant rejoycing in the Lord Jeſus: Thus, with my conſtant Prayers for you, I commend you to the Grace of God, in Chriſt, and Reſt

London, *Febr.* 8. 1689.

Your moſt Affectionate Friend and Brother in the Lord,

GEORGE PORTER.

LETTER IV.

To a Relation of the Authors.

Mrs. *Rogers*,

I Have read your doleful Letter, wherein you expreſs your diſtreſs of mind under which you lately labour'd; 'twas indeed a very ſad miſ-

miſapprehenſion of God, and of your own condition; but yet this is no more than what hath befaln many a dear Servant of God, who have managed the ſame Objection againſt themſelves, and have labour'd under the ſame affrightments. This you counterballance with the comfortable account you give of God's great Mercy to you in commanding down theſe waves and ſtorms: I rejoice with you in this, and pray that God would pleaſe to confirm and ſettle you in the ſenſe of his Love. And that you may go forward in your preſent peaceable Eſtate, I would adviſe you to take a due care of your Body, and to reduce it into order; I know well you are naturally melancholly, and you may be aſſured the Devil took no ſmall advantage from thence, to raiſe up your diſtreſſing fears; and if you take not heed, to take away this advantage, he may (except God wonderfully prevent) raiſe up trouble to you a ſecond time: 'Tis not poſſible for me at ſo great a diſtance to direct you in this matter; Phyſicians upon the place that ſee you, and can occaſionally fit or change their preſcriptions, are only fit to adviſe you. This being cared for, I ſhall only put you in mind of a few things, which I would have you to eſtabliſh upon your mind; and theſe are ſuch as a review of your apprehenſions in your former trouble will help you to underſtand. Firſt then, Call to mind that ſuch dreadful Terrors as you have had, are not to be underſtood as certain evidences of God's rejecting thoſe that are ſo afflicted; tho you ſo concluded againſt your ſelf, yet the preſent peace which God in great mercy hath given

you, is enough to tell you, that you were miſtaken when you thought ſo. *Heman*'s Caſe, and the inſtances of many others of your own Acquaintance, may abundantly ſatisfy you, that theſe things may befall the precious Servants of God. Secondly, Note alſo, That a true converted Perſon may be brought to that paſs, as to deny all the Evidences of Grace which he formerly had, and may condemn himſelf for an Hypocrite, when at the ſame time theſe Evidences appear to By-ſtanders, and ſhine through the black Cloud of their terror. Thirdly, 'Tis further to be noted, that the ſad Speeches ſuch Men utter, and the deſperate concluſions that ſuch do make, are little elſe than the Diſcourſes of thoſe that are diſtracted; nor will God rigidly preſs them upon us, as ſins of that nature which we would take them to be. God, in Mercy, conſiders our diſtreſs, and will more gently paſs by ſuch extravagancies, than we can readily believe. 4. You ſhould alſo call to mind, that you and others in this Caſe, boldly venture to determine that, which neither you nor no Man elſe can know; as that you were cut off, reprobated, made to be deſtroyed, no time of Mercy left, &c. This was a concluſion which you had no warrant to make, nor could you prove it: If you concluded your preſent ſtate to be bad, you ſhould not have taken upon you to pronounce God's purpoſe to have been againſt you for the future; Who knows the Mind of God? 5. I alſo think that you might poſſibly have ſome diſadvantage, by ſome darkneſs of mind, about the nature of Faith; ſome expreſſions in your Letter (where you complain

plain you could not believe) look as if you thought Faith must be a believing that our sins are pardoned; I will not much insist on this, because I may mistake: But if you had such a mistake in your mind, 'tis no wonder to say you could not believe. These things you may do well to consider as mistakes, which the disordered Reason you had, run upon, to the increase of your trouble; and now, while you are in the calm, fix the contrary upon your mind, and come up as fully as you can to these following conclusions. 1. Let the amiable, lovely, and compassionate Nature of God be deeply impressed upon your mind; think often, seriously meditate, That *God is Love*, That *he delights not in the death of sinners*; That he is willing to save. 2. Make much of the probability, or even possibility of Salvation, even when the assurance of Faith is wanting; 'tis a great stay, to be able to nourish hope concerning this thing. 3. Persuade your self for certain, That *God's Decree is no rule for you to go by*, and that you must interpret his Decree by his Promises; for it's certain his Decree doth not contradict his Promise. 4. Assure your self, that if God sincerely incline your heart to accept of Christ as your Righteousness and Lawgiver, and endeavour faithfully to live accordingly, he will undoubtedly fulfil his Promise of Peace and Pardon to you; and that it is a comfortable evidence of his special Grace. 5. Do not think you want Faith, because you have not assurance; *Faith is such a belief of the proffer of Salvation by Christ in the Gospel, as makes us willing to accept it upon God's terms.* 6. Listen not to severe and malignant

lignant ſuggeſtions of Satan againſt the Merciſulneſs and Goodneſs of God; if any ſuch thoughts come into your mind, caſt them out preſently, and raiſe up your mind unto a deteſtation of them. 7. Be thankfully content with that meaſure of Peace which God hath given you, expect not more than you ought, but patiently wait, in holy walking, and dependance upon God, till he inlarge you with Joy and Peace in believing; 'tis a mercy that he allows us peaceable encouraging hopes; all muſt not expect to be treated in his Banquetting-houſe, with his Banner of Love over them. 8. Live watchfully; Lament daily failings, and ſo make up Peace with God daily; expect at beſt, you will have cauſe of complaint againſt your ſelf, but ſtill conſider God's merciful Promiſe to Pardon; and that for common infirmities, he will not be ſevere, nor ſhould we affright our ſelves with them; conſider theſe few things, and endeavour to ſettle your mind upon them; God that hath brought you up out of the horrible Pit, will, I hope, preſerve you from the like diſtreſs. I am glad to hear your Brother is grown better; in time he may be capable to do Service, which I earneſtly deſire, and ſhall pray for. I am

Newcaſtle,
Jan. 28. 89.

Your aſſured Friend,

RICH. GILPIN.

LET-

LETTER V.

Written to another Relation of the Author's by an Old and Experienced Chriſtian.

My dear Friend,

I Would not have difference in Opinion, or alterations in worldly Conditions, to breed a diſtance between us; The Lord pardon us, for we are apt to grow cold in love. And, O that the ancient Spirit of Love among Chriſtians might be revived, which would more honour Chriſt, than all our Conformity, or Nonconformity! For the Kingdom of Chriſt, and the glory of Chriſtianity, lies not in Forms and Opinions, but in Power, and Holineſs, and Righteouſneſs, and Joy of the Holy Ghoſt, and love to one another.

I have been under *deep Melancholly*, and many Temptations, and Buffetings of Satan, and many have paſſed by me, as the *Levite* did the wounded Man in the way to *Jericho*, and have not only withdrawn from me, but cenſured me alſo. I hope I ſhall love and pardon all thoſe who in the hour of temptation withdrew from me, and ſtood afar off, becauſe of my ſorrow; nay thoſe, who added affliction to my affliction. It were a ſhame for me to complain of any unkindneſs of my Friends, when Chriſt hath been ſo kind to me; he helped, ſuccoured me, ſtood by me, when all forſook me; I looked on my right hand, and on my left hand, and there

was

was none that cared for my Soul; even then did the Lord appear a preſent help, elſe the great waters of Unbelief and Deſpair had overwhelmed me; for I have had greater Conflicts with Satan, greater ſhakings of Spirit than I had at my firſt Converſion. I have been ready to give up all for loſt; yet all hath been in order to clearer manifeſtations of Everlaſting Love; Chriſt hath carried me through ſeveral Graves, ſeveral Chambers of Darkneſs, and Fields of Temptation, yet all in order to light and triumph, and greater diſcoveries of his Power, Wiſdom, Faithfulneſs, Love to me; I have exceedingly put Chriſt to it, as much as ever any; I would not believe, unleſs I might put my Finger in his Wounds; unleſs I had ſuch and ſuch clear manifeſtations and ſealings given him. O this unbelieving and proud temper of ſpirit hath coſt me very dear; though Chriſt hath wonderfully indulged me, I have put him to take ſtrange courſes with me; nay, to throw me with *Jonas* into the Belly of the Whale, and of Hell it ſelf, that he might further convince me of my diſobedience and unbelief, and of his mighty glorious power, in preſerving and delivering me out of the gulph of Temptations. He hath ſhewed many Miracles of mercy and grace towards me, too big for me to expreſs. Heaven only is fit ſufficiently to declare thoſe wonderful dealings of his. If ever any was a pattern of rich grace, I am. You never ſo grieved, and wounded, and tempted Chriſt, as I have done; and therefore never was caſt into thoſe Hells, ſcorched in thoſe Fires, ſcourged

ſcourged with thoſe Rods, exerciſed with thoſe Temptations, that I have been exerciſed with. I cannot tell what God hath been doing to me. As the Heavens are high above the Earth, ſo are his thoughts above all my thoughts, or words. Sure I am, I ſhould have been in Hell, and in Chains of darkneſs, if I had had my deſert. But God hath ſtretched out his Arm of power and love, and fetched me up out of the loweſt Pit, where I was ſunk, and diſplayed the banners of his Love over me, and opened his heart, and ſhewed me his Blood. That thus he ſhould deal with me, the very worſt piece of old *Adam*; nay, a piece of Hell, Angels and Men may ſtand amazed at; ſo great, and ſo unexpected were the manifeſtations of his Love. But what ſhall I ſay, It is Chriſt, it is Chriſt, an Infinite Perſon; 'tis impoſſible for any other (Men or Angels all put together) to contain ſuch his Love; ſuch ſtrange Love, to ſuch an unworthy Wretch! I write and ſpeak what I do not fully comprehend: If I did fully know it, Mortality could not bear it; it would immediately be ſwallowed up, and ſink under the weight of Infinite Love. Ah, but dear Friend, I am not yet out of Gunſhot, I ſee a great Field of Enemies before me; a Devil full of Policy and Malice, a deſperate wicked World, a Heart, in which is a World of evil, nay an Hell of Wickedneſs; all theſe I have to grapple with, each of them ſtands armed with thouſands of Temptations; I muſt fight, and overcome too, elſe undone for ever. I confeſs it is a good Fight, a glorious

Fight,

Fight, becauſe I have ſuch a good Captain; but often I am ſorely put to it; when I take a view of my Enemies, I think I ſhall never be able to ſtand againſt ſuch Principalities and Powers. The Enemy hath too dangerous Correſpondence within me; Spiritual Pride and Security, Lord keep me humble and watchful, and eying the Enemy, and alſo eying my Captain. Living out of my ſelf, and fighting in his ſtrength, and then my Soul ſhall tread down Strength daily, and triumph always in Chriſt, and in the power of his might.

I hear the Lord is pleaſed to keep you under the Rod, and to exerciſe you with the Infirmities of a dying body, as he doth me; He hath worn (as I may ſay) his Rods upon me, as a ſtubborn Child. He hath tried his Axes, and Hammers, and Saws upon me; you cannot imagine what a Rock I am under all his ſtroaks. I hope Afflictions work more kindly with you than they do with me; and that you are found better metal in the fire than I am. I hear you are under Melancholly as well as I, though not in ſo great a degree. Satan can make uſe of it to raiſe ſtrange ſtorms and tempeſts, and confuſions and darkneſſes in the Soul, as I have found by experience, though Chriſt turned all to good. Such Melancholly Perſons had need be pitied, and tendred; Men uſually do not pity them, Chriſt will. I could tell you many experiences of a Melancholly Condition, but the time fails me. Let us lift up our heads in faith and patience, our Redemption draweth near; ſhortly we ſhall be out of the reach of Satan,

Satan, Sin, Melancholly, Sickneſs, *&c.* we have a *Jordan* to go over, but the Ark goes before us; it ſhall be made paſſable. Chriſt will take us by the hand, and bring us through to the other ſide. I mention you daily in my prayers, do you the like. I am

Yours in Chriſt; your Fellow-ſoldier, and Sufferer,

T. L.

LETTER VI.

Sent to a Relation of the Author's.

Chriſtian Friend,

THE Lord hath made me ſo ſenſible of your diſconſolate Condition, that you are ſeldom out of my thoughts, and frequent remembrances in my Prayers, that God would give you comfort and peace in believing, which he can convey by what inſtrument he pleaſeth. We read in *Job* 33. 23, 24. *If there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs: Then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ranſom.* *Elihu* in theſe words makes a defence for God's proceedings with man; where he ſhews, it is not man's Ruine that God deſires by his various methods; he ſpeaks in dreams, and by afflictions; and he ſends a Meſſenger ſometimes with the affliction, to ſhew unto a man his uprightneſs. I hope God

God hath no design to manifest his wrath to you, but to give you evidences of your sincerity; for if you did not love God, you would not lament for his absence as you do. Supposing that your delays in opening to Christ have caused him to depart from you, never to return more; if you had rejected the good motions of the Spirit, it appears by your sorrow, that it was not out of malice, nor no other fault, but what the Spouse was guilty of: If he should cast off every one that does not always readily obey his call, he would not manifest so great willingness to receive all those that come to him: You may be, and I doubt not but you are mistaken in your Condition, as Mrs. *Honnywood* was, whom God convinced by a Miracle. *Peter*, tho he denied his Lord, and forswore him, yet he manifested himself first to him, rather than to any of the other Disciples, and took care that he should have the first news of his Resurrection. Christ is a merciful and faithful High-Priest; he considers our Infirmities; he is full of bowels of Compassion, and came to seek and save that which was lost. Give no credit to Satan, who would make you believe that God is not willing to be reconciled, who sends Ambassadors on purpose to beseech us to be so: If we do our utmost, we cannot depend on our own Righteousness, but must rely on the mercy of God in Christ; which if you do, it will be the way to comfort here, or at length you will come safe to Heaven, which is the Prayer of

Your Compassionate Friend,

G. D.

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A DIS-

A DISCOURSE Concerning TROUBLE of MIND, AND THE DISEASE of MELANCHOLY.

PART I.

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For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

The INTRODUCTION.

THE Miseries under which the whole race of Men have now for a long time groaned, and under which they still groan, are owing to the Fall of Man. The day on which our first Parents complied with the temptation of the Devil, was a mournful day to them, and in its effects no less sad to us. It filled their once pure

and quiet hearts with trouble and diſorder, and made them unable to think of their great Creator with delight. It intercepted thoſe chearful and comfortable beams of his Love, which were more ſatisfying to them than all the glories of the lower Paradiſe: For tho' it did, after the Fall, abound with all the ſame natural refreſhments, with the ſame Rivers, Herbs, Trees and Flowers; yet it was to them no more a Paradiſe. No Muſick could delight their ſenſe, when they heard a terrible voice from God, ſummoning them to anſwer for their Crime; no objects could pleaſe their eyes, when they ſaw the Clouds thickning over their heads, and dreadful frowns in the face of their mighty Judge: All the Creatures could miniſter nothing to their eaſe or ſafety, when the great Creator was againſt them. From their Apoſtacy we may derive all our miſeries; both the pains and ſickneſſes that afflict our Bodies, and the fears and terrors that overwhelm our Souls. Our Bodies are liable to a Thouſand calamities that may be both long and ſharp; but how long and how ſharp ſoever they be, they do not altogether give us ſuch a ſenſible and ſuch lively grief, as we have when we are under diſtreſſes of Conſcience, and when we are under a ſenſe of the Wrath of God, that is due to us for Sin. There are many perſons who endeavour by all the Rules of Art, to give relief and help againſt the miſchiefs that attend our Bodies, but which after all their Art will go into the Grave; and there are as many, that by the Duty of their Office, and the

the Character they bear, are obliged to imitate their Saviour, *To preach good tidings to the meek, and to bind up the broken hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound*, Isa. 61. 1. But they are many times at a loss, to know what Remedies to apply to these inward and spiritual Diseases; and always unable to make their applications successful, unless God himself, by his Almighty Power, *Create Peace*, and turn that Chaos, and those Confusions under which a poor troubled Soul is buried, into the joy and light of day. It pleases the Wise God, that may make us serve to what uses he thinks most convenient for the good of the Universe, and the welfare of the Church, to suffer some of his Servants to feel the bitterness of Sin, and the terrors of his amazing-wrath; to be overwhelm'd with the fear of Hell, and to be for a long season even as in Hell it self; that so when they are delivered, they may warn those that are at ease, that they beware of Sin, lest it bring them also into a state so dreadful and so terrible; and that from their own experience, they may with tenderness and compassion strive more earnestly to assist and help those whose Consciences are in a flame, and who are full of anguish and tribulation: That when they are escaped out of the snare of the Fowler, they may strive to distintangle those who are yet in trouble; and being themselves cured of their horror and amazement, they may lead their yet wounded brethren to that kind Physician, to that loving Jesus, with whose Blood

their Wounds were cleanſed and healed.

As to my ſelf, having been in *Long affliction*, and great diſtreſs of Conſcience for many Months, and under a continued fear and apprehenſion of God's diſpleaſure; and being now, through his inexpreſſible Grace, not without ſome hope of his acceptance, being delivered from violent and overwhelming ſorrows, I would moſt readily give all the advice and help I can to thoſe that are yet mourning under deſertions, and complaining that God is departed from them, and that he remembers them no more. After the many waves and billows that went over me, through the great goodneſs of God I now enjoy a calm; and I pity, and would fain help thoſe who are yet labouring in the deep; and for them peculiarly I write this Treatiſe; in which, tho' there be many things leſs exact than a Critical Reader may expect; yet there are ſome in which, I hope, a diſtreſſed Soul may find relief. The Method I intend to follow, is this:

In this Firſt Part,

1. To ſhew what is meant by the Anger of God; and whence it is that he is angry with his own Servants.

2. What obligations we are under to Patience and Humility, and ſeveral other Graces, when we are under a ſenſe of his diſpleaſure.

3. Whence it is that his Anger towards his own People is but for a ſhort ſpace.

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CHAP. I.

Of the Anger of God, and whence it is that he is ſometimes angry with his own Servants.

I. WE muſt know, that the Infinite Majeſty of Heaven is not ſubject to thoſe unquiet paſſions to which our weak and frail nature is obnoxious; he is not ſometimes what he was not before; he is always in himſelf the very ſame, his Eſſence is unchangeable; but he is pleaſed to ſtoop to our weakneſs, and clothes his Intentions in words that may moſt ſuitably convey to our minds the knowledg of what he deſigns. In his moſt pure and bleſſed nature there is a perpetual calm and tranquility; nor does he ſuffer any of thoſe commotions and diſorders that are in angry men. His *Anger* is his Reſolution or his Will to puniſh his ſinning-Creatures; or ſometimes it relates to the evils themſelves which ſinners endure, as Pain, and Fear, and Sorrow, and Wars, and Famine, and Peſtilence, and the like Calamities. He is ſaid to be pleaſed with us, when we are obedient, and when his face ſhines upon us in a comfortable and a gracious manner; when he accepts our perſons and our duties, and refreſhes our hearts with the reviving-hopes of Glory, through Jeſus Chriſt: But he is then angry, when he withdraws the chearful influences and quickning motions of his Holy Spirit;

alſo when we pray, and he ſhuts out our Prayer, and leaves our poor Souls to languiſh under deſpair or unbelief; and when we find in our ſelves no ſpiritual and heavenly Life. He may alſo be ſaid to be Angry, when he ſends long and ſore afflictions and diſtreſſes on our Bodies and our Souls, and withholds his bleſſing from all the methods that are uſed with a deſign to give us help; and when he proceeds to a terrible execution of his threats, this Act of his is called Vengeance, as in *Pſal.* 99. 8. *Thou waſt a God that forgaveſt them, though thou tookeſt vengeance of their inventions.*

II. God is ſometimes angry with his own people; it is indeed Paternal caſtigatory wrath that he ſends upon them; but not deſtroying fury. Thus he is ſaid to be angry with *Moſes*, *Aaron*, and *Miriam*; and Pſal. 74. 1. *O God, why haſt thou caſt us off for ever? Why doth thine Anger ſmoke againſt the ſheep of thy paſture?* Thus *Heman* complains, *Pſal.* 88. 7. *Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou haſt afflicted me with all thy waves.* And ſo the Church complains, *Lam.* 1. 12. *ch.* 2. 1. *ch.* 3. 1. The Reaſons of this are ſuch as theſe:

1. Becauſe their Sins are of a greater aggravation than the ſins of others. They ſin againſt him when they have taſted of his Goodneſs, when he has offered to them more clear Light, more experience of his Love, than to the reſt of Men; when he is wounded in the houſe of his Friends, he will reſent ſuch Injuries and Affronts; and they

they uſually ſin againſt more frequent Motions of his Holy Spirit; and after they have engaged to be his, they break their Vows, and forget their Covenants; they loyter in his Service, when they have by the peace of their Souls, and the hope of Heaven that he hath given them, found his Work to be a reward, and that he is a very good Maſter; and ſhall he not viſit for theſe things? What fitter methods can he take, than to laſh them for their ingratitude, and unbecoming Behaviour to ſo kind a Friend, as he has been to them all along? He is at more coſt and charge with the Children of his Family, than with others; and if they diſobey him, they muſt feel his Diſpleaſure, and the ſmart of the Rod. *You only have I known of all the Families of the earth; therefore I will puniſh you for all your iniquities*, Amos 3. 2.

2. To warn others, and to wipe off all Aſperſions that might be caſt upon his Holineſs. He is angry with his own, to let the profane World ſee that he is no reſpecter of Perſons; and that Sin, wherever it is, ſhall not go unpuniſhed. He puts ſome into the fiery Furnace, to let thoſe that are at eaſe know what they have alſo deſerved, and what they may expect, if they do not ſpeedily Repent and turn. Some Ages feel the weightier Blows of his Hand, and are viſited with ſevere Judgments, to teach future Generations to be more careful to obſerve his Laws, and to do his Will, Deut. 29. 22, 24. *The generation to come of the children that ſhall riſe up after you, and the ſtranger that ſhall come from a far land, ſhall ſay when they ſee the*

plagues of the Land, and the ſickneſſes which the Lord hath laid upon it, &c. even all nations ſhall ſay, wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? He lays ſome Countries deſolate, that their Deſolations may more effectually ſhew the evil of Sin, and preach Repentance to their Neighbours round about. He ſets ſome on Fire, that they may ſerve as Beacons to warn the reſt, of approaching Danger. He is ſometimes angry, that he may maintain the Honour of his Laws, and the Juſtice of his Government. He throws ſome upon Sick beds, that others may by them learn to know their own frailty, and prepare for the like Tryals. Some he leaves in Darkneſs, and Anguiſh, and Tribulation, that others may learn to prize the Light, leſt they come to the very ſame Calamity. He ſhoots his Arrows into the Souls of ſome of his Servants, that all who behold his ſevere and righteous proceeding, may tremble at it, and learn to fear him who is ſo Holy, and ſo Juſt a God. That they may not dare to venture upon thoſe Sins, under the woful effects of which, they ſee their fellow-creatures groan ſo very much; and he muſt be an hardned Malefactor indeed, that will practice his old Crimes when he ſees another whipt or executed for thoſe of the very ſame kind. Thus the view, and the report of his Judgments have a natural tendency to reform the World, to purify and make it better, as Thunder and Lightning cleanſe the Air, and make it more healthful. How wicked is this preſent World, notwithſtanding the manifold Examples of his Juſtice? And how much

much more wicked would it be, if he ſuffer'd Sin always to be unpuniſhed? His beſt Servants are too ſecure and careleſs, too forgetful of him, and of themſelves, till he awaken them by ſome ſevere ſtroak upon themſelves, or others, and make them to be more diligent, and more ſerious, when they ſee the Clouds gather, and the Night drawing on; and by his anger he deſigns to teach us all to put an higher value on the Love of Chriſt, and to make us know of how high a nature our Offence was, ſeeing his only Son endured ſo much of his Wrath, ere we could obtain a Pardon. And when we ſmart our ſelves under his diſpleaſure, to make us ever admire the kindneſs of our Saviour, that freely ſuffer'd ſo much ſmart and pain for us.

3. He is angry with his own, to teach them to value his favour more than they ever did. If it were not that we feel the bitterneſs of his Anger, we ſhould not have ſo ſweet a reliſh of his Love. If he did not ſometimes withdraw himſelf, we ſhould not think his preſence ſo comfortable as it is. If it were not ſometimes Winter, and ſtorm, and froſty Weather, we ſhould not take ſo great a pleaſure in the Summer-ſeaſon. Oh! how pleaſant are the Smiles of God, when we have long laid under the terror of his Frowns? How pleaſant is it to find him to be indeed our Friend, when we have long thought him to be our Enemy? How pleaſant is it to have the hope of Heaven, when a Man has long trembled at the very Gate of Hell? When we have been long wandring for our Follies,

Follies, as in a ſtrange Land, how pleaſant is it to come to our home again? After we have been among our Enemies, to come to our Heavenly Father, to have him to meet us with encouraging words, to embrace us in his Arms, to feaſt us at his Table, to call us his Children, to forget all our former Injuries, and to be at peace with us? How ſhall we run under his Wing for ſhelter, when we have found, that innumerable Dangers overtook us while he withdrew his Care? How ſhall we wait upon him with Obedience and Love, and yield him faithful Service in all that he Commands, when we remember what Griefs our former diſobedience brought upon us? He is angry with us, to cure our Luxuries, our Wantonneſs, and Pride; and when our Follies have brought us low, we ſhall give a moſt hearty welcome to the firſt dawning of the day, to the firſt ſhining of his face; and tho before, we priz'd at a ſmall rate his higheſt Favours, and his largeſt Entertainments, we ſhall now value one glimps of Light, as much as we did the whole Sun before; and to partake, tho but of the Crumbs that fall from his Table, will ſeem to us both an honour and a privileg. After many days of Storm and Darkneſs, 'tis the more pleaſant to ſee the Sun; even the very Birds ſing with a ſweeter Note when there is a clear Sky; and the Furrows of the Fields rejoyce after a long Drought, to be refreſh'd with the former and the latter pain. When a Country has been long haraſs'd with Confuſions, Tumults, and bloody Wars, how delightful is the return of Peace?

When

When a ſoul has mourned a great while in fear and trouble, how delightful is it to hear the voice of its God, ſaying, *Be of good comfort*! How do his Promiſes, like dew from the womb of the morning, cauſe his poor drooping ſpirits to revive? *Iſa.* 12. 1.

CHAP. II.

The Anger of God towards his People, is but for a ſhort ſeaſon; and why he is pleaſed to order it to be ſo.

1. HIS anger is but for a moment, if compar'd with the Eternity of Happineſs which he deſigns them: Their troubles and afflictions ſhall have a period, but their glory ſhall never have an end: They weep for a while, and they ſhall rejoice for ever: They are diſconſolate a few years on earth; but how little and inconſiderable are theſe to the vaſt durations of Eternity?

2. His Anger is but for a moment, if compared with the continuance of his Love. In his Favour is Life; that is, uſually the greater portions of our Life are laden with his Benefits; we have more pledges of his Love, than meſſengers of his Wrath: We have more Mercies than Croſſes: We have a thouſand eaſie Bleſſings for one ſharp Affliction: His Diſpleaſure brings a ſtorm, but his Favour ſhines when that is gone and paſt: We have many a fair Seaſon,

Seaſon, to one dark and gloomy Day. The Reaſons why his Anger is but for a moment, are,

1. He remembers the frame of his poor people; for if his Wrath ſhould be long continued, they muſt utterly ſink and periſh; Pſal. 103. 14. *For he remembreth our frame; he knoweth that we are but duſt.* One Frown cauſes us to ſink and tremble; what then would his multiplied Frowns and Diſpleaſure do? He knows our tenderneſs, with what evil inclinations our nature is corrupted; how prone we are to ſin; and how, if he ſhould be ſtrict to mark what we do amiſs, he muſt continually deſtroy the works of his own hands, and have none left to ſerve him here on earth: He remembers with what frailties we are daily beſet, and he pities us as a Father does the weakneſs of his Child: He could kill us in a minute, and take away our breath; how ſoon can he ſcatter a little duſt, and pull in pieces our frail conſtitution? For we are as unable to reſiſt his Anger, as the duſt to reſiſt the wind: he knows we are ſo weak, that if he let us alone, we ſhall ſoon decay; and that there needs not the Force of his Arm, and the Greatneſs of his Power, to cruſh ſuch worms as we are: As *David* ſaid, *Is the king of Iſrael come out after a flea?* 2 Sam. 24. 14. ſo may we in our diſtreſſes ſay to God, Why doſt thou arm thy ſelf with wrath againſt us, whom one word of thy mouth can throw upon the ground, or ſend into the grave? It is not with him as with the great Oppreſſors of the world, that uſe their greater power to trample upon thoſe that are of unequal

unequal ſtrength; no, he delights to bind up the broken, to heal the wounded, and to comfort thoſe that mourn. Iſa. 57. 16. *For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wrath; for the ſpirit ſhould fail before me, and the ſouls which I have made.* Such is the impatience, the unbelief, and the unſuitable behaviour of his people, that they give him cauſe enough to be always angry, but he does not proceed with the utmoſt rigour of his Juſtice; he freely pardons what with right he might exact. *Pſal.* 78. 38, 39. Their heart was not right with him, *They did flatter him with their mouth; but he being full of compaſſion, forgave their iniquity, and deſtroyed them not; yea, many a time he turned his anger away, and did not ſtir up all his wrath: for he remembred that they were but fleſh, a wind that paſſeth away, and cometh not again.* And when our extremities are ſo great, and our ſenſe of his diſpleaſure is ſo very preſſing, that we know not what to do, we may deſire him to remember his own Greatneſs, and our Frailty; that we are his own handy-work, and that we are no more able to reſiſt his Power, than we are to change our own natures, and to be his Equals. *Job* 13. 25. *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? Wilt thou purſue the dry ſtubble? Remember, I beſeech thee, that thou haſt made me as the clay,* Job 10. 9.

2. Reaſon why his Anger towards his people is but for a moment, is, Becauſe he is obliged to it by his Covenant. *If they break my ſtatutes,* &c. Pſal. 89. 31, 32, 33. *then will I viſit their tranſgreſſion with the rod, and their iniquity with ſtripes; nevertheleſs, my loving-kindneſs will I*

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not utterly take from them, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail. He is obliged by the Covenant of Grace, to be their God, to uſe all the methods that his Infinite Wiſdom ſees neceſſary for their final Happineſs; and if his Anger, and their own Afflictions will contribute to this, tho their fleſh be pained, and their bodies ſmart, he will not fail to uſe thoſe ſeverities. His deareſt ſervants may by temptation, and their unwatchfulneſs, be overtaken by their ſpiritual Enemies; they may wound and hurt themſelves, and occaſion his departure; and to excite them to a due conſideration of their Folly, he will leave them for a ſeaſon. Their ſins are the object of his abhorrence, and he may ſend very ſore troubles upon them, tho they ſhall even then come upon a gracious errand, and promote their future welfare, when in the anguiſh of their ſouls they may conclude them to be the mark of his Eternal Wrath; he will not ſpare his rods, nor by a fond Indulgence ſuffer them to take their own courſe; for a Parent, you know, will correct his own child, tho he concerns not himſelf with thoſe that are ſtrangers to the Family. The Anger of God for your ſin may deprive you of your deareſt Comforts, your moſt kind Relations, your moſt beloved Children, your Eſtate, your Health, and your Eaſe; and yet in all theſe he may have a deſign to make you more full of Holineſs, and to bring you nearer to himſelf: This is an ordinary Diſcipline, wherewith he trains up all thoſe whom he will convey to Glory, tho their own Reaſon, and their gloomy Thoughts, may judg that it is for a quite contrary purpoſe. He has

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promiſed, That all things ſhall work together for our good; and he is faithful when he lays upon us the ſevereſt ſtrokes, becauſe they ſtir up our ſleeping Grace, and purge away our Sin.

3. Reaſon his Anger towards his people is but for a moment, Becauſe whatever his preſent diſpenſations are, he will never throw off the Relation of a Father to them; they do not render void the Kindneſs and the Grace by which he did at firſt adopt them to be his own. A Father when he frowns, and when he corrects, is ſtill a Father; and his bowels earn with him, when the rebellion and undutifulneſs of his child cauſes him to be ſevere. Tho we groan and weep through the bitterneſs of our grief, yet he changes not his Paternal care; as Chriſt, when he was a man of ſorrows, was pronounced by God to be his beloved Son, *Pſal.* 103.13. *Like as a father pities his children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* None of our earthly Friends can be more tender-hearted than he is; only with this difference, that they would heal our wounds when they firſt begin to ſmart; and he being more skilful, does make our Cure to advance by ſlow degrees; he does bereave us of this or that enjoyment which we dearly love, becauſe he ſees it neceſſary for our Salvation; as 'tis many times expedient to cut off a gangreen'd part of the body, to ſave our Life. He will ſeparate between us and our Iniquities, rather than that they ſhould make a ſeparation between us and him; and there is nothing but a moſt tender Love in all this. Jer. 31. 20. *Is Ephraim my dear ſon? is he a pleaſant child? for*

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ſince I ſpake againſt him, I do earneſtly remember him ſtill; therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will ſurely have mercy upon him, ſaith the Lord. If there were any ways more mild and gentle, that would equally promote our good, he would uſe them with the greateſt readineſs, if our own abſolute neceſſity did not require that he ſhould bring Judgments upon us. Nor would he uſe at all thoſe methods that ſeem to be rigid and ſevere. Thoſe that are his people, ſhould be in as much eaſe as other Men, and laugh and rejoice as much as they do; but only that he would by his diſpleaſure teach us, that knowledg of himſelf, that faith, and that patience, and thoſe other Graces, which without his ſeaſonable Corrections we ſhould never know. 'Tis more grateful to him to ſmile than to frown, to reward than to puniſh. Deut. 5. 29. *O that there were ſuch an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever.* When we wander, his Goodneſs and his Love will not ſuffer him to ſee us run to miſery. His Anger will overtake us, to ſtop us in our haſty courſe, and to reduce us into the right way. He never ſtrikes but for juſt Reaſons, tho they may be for the preſent very much wrapt up in his own Decree. There are many people whom we are angry with, and reprove, whom notwithſtanding we do in the mean time moſt ſincerely love; and Chriſt has told us, Rev. 3. 19. *As many as I love, I rebuke and chaſten.*

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4. The Anger of God is but for a moment, becauſe he delights in Mercy, Pſalm 103. 8. *The Lord is merciful and gracious, ſlow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever.* It is long before he puniſhes, and 'tis with haſte that he comes to our help when we repent; and many times before. In the midſt of Wrath he remembers Mercy; he does not always inflict what we have deſerved, but conſiders what is moſt proper for him to lay upon us, and what we are able to bear; and therefore he gives to us ſome mitigations with our moſt bitter Cup. He is called the *Father of Mercies, and the God of all Comfort*; and tho Puniſhment does proceed from him, as well as Tenderneſs and Affection, yet he is no where called the *Father of Judgments*. Mercy ariſeth from his own Nature, and he delighteth in it, Micah 7. 18. *He retaineth not his anger for ever, becauſe he delighteth in mercy.* His wrath is ſaid to be reſerv'd in Golden Viols, *Rev.* 15. 7. *i. e.* it doth not flow forth all at once, but by degrees; but his Mercy is compared to a River, and a flowing Stream, *Iſaiah 66.* 12; to the Oyl of gladneſs, to the ſmell of Myrrh, Aloes, and *Caſſia*. It is a Glory to this God to relieve the miſerable, and to help his Servants, when all their power and might is gone; and he ends the Controverſy with them, when there is cauſe enough on their ſide, that he ſhould purſue the Quarrel further. When he leads us into a Wilderneſs, yet he provides ſome Water, ſome refreſhment for us there. It is one of the great Wonders of his

Providence, that he ſupports thoſe poor Souls that have no light of Evidence, no ſenſe of his Love, no hope, nothing but the fears of Wrath and Deſolation; and yet the matter of Fact, and our own Experience plainly tells us, that ſo it is, his everlaſting Arms are underneath, and his Power does maintain our Life, when we ſay, that he has forgotten to be gracious. He bottles our Tears when we weep, and hears our Groans when we lament, and proportions the Troubles that he ſends, that they ſhall not be too long, nor too violent. Jer. 30. 11. *I will not make a full end of thee, I will correct thee in meaſure, and will not leave thee altogether unpuniſhed.* And thoſe Afflictions which his People ſuffer, are not in all reſpects proper Puniſhments, becauſe his Anger is mixed with mildneſs, and mitigated by the Interceſſions of a Mediator, Lam. 3. 31, 32. *The Lord will not caſt off for ever; but tho he cauſe grief, yet will he have compaſſion according to the multitude of his tender mercies.*

5. That his Anger is but for a moment, is for his own Name ſake. His Nature is moſt inclinable to do us good; therefore the Prophet, to thoſe Idolaters mentioned in 1 *Kings* 18. 24. ſays, *The God that anſwers by fire, let him be God*; and he choſe that Element above the reſt, to ſignify how ſoon we ſhall have Mercy, it comes as upon the wings of the Wind, it is as ſwift as the rays of Light. Hoſea 11. 9. *I will not execute the fierceneſs of mine anger, I will not return to deſtroy Ephraim, for I am God and not man.* A Man when he is greatly provoked by his Enemy, is not

not satisfied with having once made him feel his Anger, but carries on his Revenge to further degrees, and only ceases the pursuit with the Death of him that he first assaulted. But the Great God, tho he is able to Conquer those that oppose him, with a total Defeat and Ruin, yet he suffers them to breathe and live, that they may Repent, and that he may cause his Goodness to shine with a greater Brightness to the World. He could follow them with one Blow after another, with a Succession of new and greater Miseries, but he restrains his Anger for his own sake. And it maybe a great Consolation to poor afflicted People to consider, that they have to deal with God, and not with Men, when they have sinn'd; they have not to deal with Men that are full of Rage and Cruelty, but with a God that is gracious and full of Mercy; not with Men that may Caress them to day, and Hate them to morrow, but with a God that is unchangeable, and even when they are in the Fire, or in the Water, his Love is still to them the very same. Men think it a dishonour to spare their inferiors, if they do not by the lowest Submissions testify their Sorrow for their Crimes; but the Great God is so far above all his Creatures, that he may when he will, think them below his Indignation, and magnify his Goodness in sparing and forgiving them when they most deserve to dye, Isaiah 4. 8, 9. *For my names sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.* 'Tis his Power that moderates his Anger. Those Persons that have the least strength, either of Rea-

ſon, or of Courage, are the moſt paſſionate, and inclinable to Revenge. In Puniſhments he ſhews his Dominion over his Creatures, but his Power over himſelf, when he forgives great Injuries, and is ſlow to puniſh great Affronts; and his Power in thoſe Acts of Grace is very great and illuſtrious. He is God, and not Man, there is more Compaſſion, and more real Pity in him, than in the moſt compaſſionate or tender hearted Man that we ever knew. He is God, and not Man, he whom we have offended, and who can deſtroy us, begins firſt to treat about a Reconciliation with us. This is not the manner and way of Men, who think that thoſe who have offended them, are to make the firſt advances towards a repairing of the Breach. There is no Attribute in the diſplaying of which the Great God glories, ſo much as in this of Mercy; and 'tis by this that he would be known, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7.

6. That his Anger is but for a moment, is becauſe he would make a difference between the righteous and the wicked. The Afflictions that he ſends upon the Righteous, are to prepare them for Heaven and Glory. But thoſe Scourges that he uſes to the Wicked and Impenitent, are but the beginning of their Sorrows, the flaſhes of thoſe Flames that will conſume them for ever. The diſtreſſes of the Righteous are ſhort, and ſo are the Proſperities of the Wicked. The Righteous are weeping here, but they ſhall rejoyce hereafter. The Wicked have now their Heaven, ſuch as it is, and hereafter they go to an Eternal Hell, and there muſt they weep and wail,

wail, when the Good and Holy shall have all their Tears wiped away. The one shall find him to be a loving Father, and to have been so in all their Tryals and Calamities; and the other shall find him to be an Enemy, and to have been so tho they had many good things in the time of the present Life. The Righteous have Sweetness and Mercy mingled with their Sorrows here; but the Wicked shall have there, pure and unmingled and intolerable Wrath. Here, in the most heavy Strokes, the Servants of God find now and then some little Comfort, but his Enemies in that World must have no drop to cool their Tongues, no refreshment, nor support for ever. The same Sun that will cherish the Righteous with his everlasting Beams, will scorch the Wicked, and fill them with an inexpressible Rage and Fury. God will throw them from all their heights, silence all their lofty Speeches, and ruin all their vain-glorious Designs, *Dan.* 4. 17. *The demand is by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know, that the most High ruleth in the kingdoms of men*, that is, by the petitions of Angels, (*Charnock*, of Gods Dominion, *p.* 767.) who cannot endure that the Empire of God should be obscur'd by the Pride of Men. Besides the tender respect that he hath to his own Glory, he is constantly presented with the Solicitations of the Angels to punish the Proud of the Earth, that darken the Glory of his Majesty. 'Tis necessary for the rescue of his Honour, and necessary for the Satisfaction of his Illustrious Attendants, who would think it a shame to them to serve a Lord

that were always unconcerned in the Rebellions of his Creatures, and would tamely ſuffer thoſe that ſpurn at his Throne. His Wrath to his Servants is with Mercy, and but for a moment; but to his Enemies it will be ſevere and abiding Wrath.

CHAP. III.

Of the ſeveral Advantages that are deſigned by God to his Servants, in his being Angry with them only for a moment; toge her with the Obligations which they are under from ſo merciful a Diſpenſation of his Providence; and the ſeveral Improvements we are to make of it.

Inf. 1. NONE of the People of God have Cauſe to conclude, That becauſe he is angry with them at preſent, therefore they are in a ſtate of Wrath. Our ſenſe and feeling of things that are very bitter, joyned with the knowledge that we have of our Guilt, and our innumerable Sins, does frequently corrupt our Reaſon, and obſcure our Faith. And from the ſeverity of his preſent Diſpenſations, we are apt to ſay, he has forgotten to be gracious. *If the Lord be with us, as Gideon ſaid, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of?* Judges 6. 13. he will be favourable no more. But this is the Language

Language of our miſtaken unbelief, Iſaiah 49. 14, 15. *Zion ſaid, The Lord hath forſaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her ſucking child? yea, ſhe may; but I will not forget thee.* Iſaiah 40. 27. *Why ſayeſt thou, O Jacob, and ſpeakeſt, O Iſrael, That my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is paſſed over from my God?* Our Sins indeed may cauſe him to withdraw the manifeſtations of his Love, ſo that we ſhall feel no comfort in our Prayers, none in his Ordinances, none in his Words. Every threatning ſhall pierce us to the quick, and no promiſe yield us quiet; and yet for all this, he may with his vital Influences return again; and tho we have not ſeen either the Sun, Moon, or Stars, for many Days and Nights, yet a glorious Light may ſucceed afterwards. In ſore Afflictions our grieved ſenſe, and the fear that attends our Guilt, and the malice of the Devil, may put us upon deſperate and unwarrantable Concluſions; and the deſerted Perſon may ſay, *I am abhorred of the Lord, he counts me for his Enemy, he is cruel to me, he is departed from me.* He anſwers me not; I go to his Miniſters, and they give me no relief; I go to his Word, and it is bitter to my taſte, it fills me with gall and wormwood. I ſeek him in my Solitudes, and in the Aſſemblies of his People, but I find him not. He has left me, he has thrown me off. *The comforter that ſhould relieve my Soul, is far from me. He hath built againſt me, he hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. Alſo when I cry and ſhout, he ſhutteth out my prayer. He is unto me as a Bear lying in wait,*

and as a Lion in ſecret places, Lam. 3. 7, 8, 9, 10. This is a ſad, and a doleful Caſe, and yet one that ſuffers all this, ought not to ſay, that there is no future help; for God may be gracious, and his wrath, tho very terrible and perplexing, is but for a moment. No Believer ought to conclude, that becauſe he is under the diſpleaſure of God at preſent, that therefore he is a Child of wrath; nor ought he from his preſent feeling, to dare to aſſert his Reprobation; it is an uſurping that Judgment which does not belong to Men, and a poſitive Determination of that which we cannot know. We may as well conclude, that when the Sun ſets, it will never riſe again, or that when thick Clouds darken the Air, it will never be fair weather any more. We ought never to forget the Caſe of *Job*; never was any Man covered with a greater heap of Miſeries, never was any Man more ſeemingly left of God, and haraſs'd by by the Devil, than he was; never did any Man make more doleful complaints than what we hear from the poor Man in his heavy tryal, as *Job* 10. 16. *Thou hunteſt me as a fierce Lyon; and again, thou ſhewſt thy ſelf marvellous upon me: thou renewſt thy witneſſes againſt me, and increaſeſt thine indignation upon me.* Chap. 19. 10. *Know now, that God hath overthrown me, and compaſſed me with his net; he hath deſtroyed me on every ſide, and I am gone, mine hope hath he removed like a tree; he hath kindled his wrath againſt me, and he counteth me unto him as one of his enemies.* And yet what a glorious deliverance had the poor Man after all this! We ought not to ſay, that becauſe we

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are miſerable at the preſent, we ſhall always be ſo; or that becauſe God is now angry, he will never be pleaſed again; no, we ought rather to remember, that it is but for a moment; and tho' the kind hand of a Friend may put us to pain, yet he does but ſearch our wounds in order to a Cure; he will not poiſon our Sores, nor, as an Enemy, take pleaſure in our Torments.

Inf. 2. We have great cauſe to be patient in all thoſe ſufferings that are the effects of God's diſpleaſure, ſeeing it is but for a moment. Mic. 7. 9. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him; till he plead my cauſe.* There is nothing to which we are more obnoxious under the ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure, than to fretfulneſs and diſcontent; as *David*, Pſal. 31. 22. *I ſaid in my haſte, I am cut off from before thine eyes.* And we ſhould with all imaginable care be fortified againſt it. This grace of Patience is that for which we ſhall all of us have very much occaſion during the manifold evils of this miſerable World; for this we ſhall have occaſion as we are Men, for as ſuch we are born to trouble; and much more ſhall we need it if we be true Chriſtians, for as ſuch, we muſt expect more trouble from the corruption of our Hearts, from the World, and from the Devil; for if he ſees us going to that Heaven from whence he is for ever excluded, his rage will prompt him to give us a continual moleſtation in our way thither. That we may therefore be prepared to reſiſt his ſubtle and violent

violent aſſaults, and to bear thoſe long and ſore Tryals that may be our lot, let us have before our eyes theſe things:

1. If when God is angry with us, we are impatient, we ſhall provoke him to further wrath, and cauſe double the him to blows of his Arm, which are at the preſent heavy enough for us to bear. If the firſt corrections bring us not to a malleable and a tender frame, He will (if he deſign our good) be forced to ſend upon us many more; our unrulineſs and impatience will add more pain and ſmart to the Rods that are upon us, and put a greater edge upon our trouble; and ſo that which at the firſt was but a ſingle ſtroke, will multiply to many more, and by this we ſhall make the evil of our affliction, which is deſign'd for our good, to become our ſin; and ſo carry that inconvenience to our Souls, which with a quiet and ſubmiſſive frame would but hurt our Bodies. We loſe by this means, all the comfortable bleſſings of a ſanctified and a well-improved Croſs, and make that yoak to gall us, which otherwiſe might lye with eaſe upon our necks.

2. Let us remember, that we are no way injured when we are under long afflictions; and that whatever come of us, God is always very juſt: *He will not lay upon man more than right*, Job 34. 23. An earthly Parent in the warmth and heat of anger, may in too ſevere a manner correct the follies of his Child; but that God that knows our frame, what is fit for him to do, and what we are able to bear, will proportion

tion his corrections to the neceſſities of our aſe, and not ſuffer our troubles to ſtay a day longer than is needful to accompliſh thoſe excellent ends for which they were deſign'd: He may in his anger pull us down and make us deſolate; but we know not what a comely ſtructure he intends to build from theſe ruins; it may be that the darkneſs that affrights us is to uſher in an eternal and a glorious day: *His ways are far above our ways.* So much greatneſs, wiſdom and goodneſs as there is in him, ſhould produce in our hearts patience and reſignation, tho' we know not what a period he intends to put to his preſent dark and unſearcheable deſigns. Tho' we are pained, he is faithful ſtill; and tho' he do not gratify our curioſity, nor ſuffer our blind eyes to pierce into the depths of his Counſels, yet let us hold this for a certain truth, That *the Lord is righteous and juſt in all his ways.* He may ſay to us, as Chriſt ſaid to *Peter*, *What I do thou knoweſt not, but thou ſhalt know hereafter*, Joh. 13.7. His Juſtice ſhould ſilence our murmuring complaints; and his faithfulneſs our diſcouragements and faintings. He never afflicts us but with reaſon; he never does it but with a deſign of our final good. The Sword that wounds us, brings a Balſom with it; it opens a paſſage to let out our Corruptions, and then it heals and cloſes up the wound again. Iſa. 30. 18. *Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment. Bleſſed are all they that wait for him.*

3. That

3. That we may bear his Anger with Patience, let us conſider what Mercies he has given us; and how much worſe we might be, than now we are; he frowns it may be upon us, but that frown might have been our final ſentence; and that anger which now is kindled againſt us, might have been Everlaſting Burnings; and tho he ſpeak to us by terrible things, yet he might have ſaid, *Depart from me, ye curſed*: The drops that fall upon us, might have been a Deluge and a Storm of Wrath; and the fiery Furnace whereinto we are thrown, to conſume our Droſs, might have been our Hell. *Why does a living man complain*, a ſinful man that might have been deprived both of Hope and Life long ago? Oh how does our Gracious God, even in our ſoreſt Trials, deal much better with us than we have deſerved! We multiply our ſorrows to a vaſt account; but if we compared them with our ſins, their number would appear to be very ſmall; if we put our Croſſes and our Iniquities into the ſame balance, we ſhould quickly ſee what a mighty difference there is between them: It will be a conſiderable motive to Patience, to conſider what we have deſerved. We bewail the loſs of the ſenſe of the Love of God, and alas we did not value it as we ſhould have done! We complain that he has forſaken us, but who among us valued his Preſence at the rate we might have valued it? We ſay that he does not hear our Prayers, that he is deaf to our Requeſt; and how often did we pray as if we prayed not? how often did he ſeek to enter into our hearts, and we gave him a repulſe? How often did

did he call and invite us to come to him, and we did not obey his call? Have we reaſon then to be impatient that he is a ſtranger to us, when we remember how he would have dwelt with us, but we ſhut him out? Tho it was our ignorance that betrayed us to it, and *we knew not what we did*. We reckon up our nights of darkneſs, how long they are, and how diſmal; but we forget how he has given us many a bright and clear day, many an hour of Peace and Joy, for one of Grief and Trouble: We have deſerved to be miſerable all the days of our Lives, for every day we ſin: we have many healthful ſeaſons, as well as times of Sickneſs; whereas he might have made our paſſage uneaſie and troubleſome in the deep waters, from the womb unto the grave; *Know therefore, that God exacteth of thee leſs than thine iniquity deſerveth*, Job 11. 6. We ſuffer juſtly for our ſins; if God ſhould enquire into the multitude, the heinouſneſs, and all the aggravations of our ſins, we ſhould have a greater multitude of Croſſes: Let us ceaſe then to be impatient; for he deals in great Tenderneſs and Mercy with us: Our troubles have been it may be ſharp and long, but they might have been more ſtinging, more bitter, and more violent, and drawn out to a more formidable length; but now becauſe it is not ſo, *he hath viſited in his anger, yet he knoweth it not in great extremity*, Job 35. 15. He has not ſtirr'd up all his wrath, nor amaz'd us with all the Thunder of his Power; let us not be like the *Iſraelites*, Pſal. 106. 7. who provoked him, and remembred not the multitude of his Mercies.

4. Con-

4. Conſider that he uſes no other methods with you when he is angry with you, than what he has us'd with his deareſt ſervants heretofore; and this may tend to compoſe your Spirits under long and ſore Tryals; are you better than *Moſes*, than *Job*, than *Heman*, than *David* and *Aſaph*, and many other excellent and holy Men, with whom he was diſpleaſed, and who felt his Wrath, though it was but for a moment? Are we more dutiful and obedient than they were? do we not merit the Chaſtiſements of our Heavenly Father as much as they did? yea, and much more. If we have the ſpirit, and the priviledge of Children, we ought not to murmur, though we have our ſhare in the diſcipline of the Family. Would we have the Courſe of Providence inverted, and changed for us? Can we imagine that we ſhall be always ſpared, when ſo many great Saints have ſmarted under the diſpleaſure of God for their ſin? We are apt to think there is no *ſorrow like to our ſorrow wherewith the Lord hath afflicted us*, Lam. 1. 12. but we do not wiſely inquire in this matter; for if we trace the ſteps of holy men of old, we ſhall find that innumerable, and very grievous Calamities were their portion as well as ours. We have heard of the diſtreſſes, and of the patience of *Job*; of the pains of his Body, and of the troubles of his Soul; and when either our Bodies or our Souls are more afflicted than his was, then it will be ſoon enough for us to begin to murmur; and if we do it not till then, we ſhall be as remarkable for our patience as he was. *Think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery trial, which*

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is to try you, as though ſome ſtrange thing hapned to you, 1 Pet. 4. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 9. *All theſe things are accompliſhed in your brethren which are in the world*; and this is duly to be thought upon; for there is nothing of which *Satan* makes a greater uſe, to perplex us in our hour of temptation, than of the length and the ſharpneſs of our trials; as if therefore God were our Enemy becauſe he does afflict; or that we are no Children becauſe we are afflicted ſo very long; thus will the Evil Spirit ſuggeſt and ſay, If thou wert a friend of God, who is ſo compaſſionate, and ſo ſlow to wrath, would he follow thee with breach upon breach, with one ſtroak after another, and let his hand be heavy upon thee day and night? He ſupports, comforts and refreſhes all his Servants, but thou haſt no refreſhment, nothing but anguiſh and vexation; therefore thou art none of his: but by Faith we muſt quench this fiery Dart, and know that the fruit of our affliction may be very ſweet, though for the preſent 'tis very bitter; and that we are under the Conduct of that Wiſdom which can order even this Croſs for good; and whatever miſts that envious Spirit may raiſe before our eyes, let us ſtill remember, *that his anger is but for a moment*; that others, whom we are ſure he lov'd, have undergone the like troubles; and his own dear Son was ſtill a Son, when a man of ſorrows; and that his Afflictions were of a great length from the Manger to the Croſs. And if God will have us to be ſo far conformable to this bleſſed Perſon, ſo that we have no reſt from trial, till we are quiet in the Grave; we ſhould

ſhould not diſtruſt his goodneſs, nor murmur at it.

5. Let us compare our preſent Sufferings and Afflictions with that Happineſs which is to come; His Anger is but for a moment, but his love will be for ever: He frowns for a moment, but he will ſhew them his pleaſed Face for ever: He corrects them, and they weep for a moment, but he will embrace them, and they ſhall rejoice for ever. *Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning:* And do we not find our hearts begin to ſpring within us, when we conſider that we are in pain for a moment, but we ſhall be at eaſe for ever? Is not this good news to thoſe that fear God, and yet are afflicted? Lift up your heads ye Mourners, ye Priſoners of hope, 'tis but for a little ſeaſon: Let not your hearts faint; I know you will ſay, Oh, I could bear any thing but the wrath of God; he is angry with my Soul; he denies an anſwer to my Prayers; he ſpeaks not to me one comfortable word. I look up to his Heavens, and they are as Braſs: I run to his Ordinances, and hear his Word in the Aſſemblies of his People; but whilſt others are wet with the dew of Heaven, I remain dry and neglected as I was. I ſeem to be *as the mountains of Gilboa, there is no dew nor rain falls upon me.* I ſeem to be under the Curſe of God; and becauſe I have formerly not improv'd the means of Grace, he ſeems to ſay of me as of the barren Figtree, *never let fruit grow upon thee more:* and can you tell me whither I ſhall go, and what I ſhall do in ſuch a caſe as this? You muſt ſtill in humble ſubmiſ-

ſubmiſſion wait upon the Lord, he ſtays from your preſent help upon a very gracious Deſign. He bottles your tears, and is acquainted with your griefs; and that anger that now bows you to the ground, ſhall in a little while be removed; and your faith and your hope will not be in vain. There are thouſands of Joys prepared to meet you when you are a little more purified and prepared for them. Iſa. 54. 7, 8. *For a ſmall moment have I forſaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlaſting kindneſs will I have mercy on thee, ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer.* Nothing can be leſs than a moment; 'tis the leaſt part of time; and yet ſo ſmall a thing as that is, are all our troubles here, to that endleſs Eternity which is to come: So if your outward afflictions, and your ſpiritual fears ſhould laſt for Life, as none can give you aſſurance to the contrary; yet all this Life is but as a moment, as nothing to that ſtate of Bleſſedneſs that comes afterward: Nor are the degrees of your ſorrows here, proportionable to the degrees of your approaching glory: *For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17. This great Apoſtle calls his afflictions very light, and yet there was never any that ſuffered more troubles from the malice of the world than he did; as you may ſee, 2 *Cor.* 11. 25, 26. What is a moment to a day, and a day to a year? And yet ſuch, and infinitely leſs, are our longeſt afflictions here, to that Eternity. What is one grain of ſand, as one ſays, (*Jurieu Balance du*

Sanctuaire, p. 72.) to all those vast heaps of sand that are in all the Sea? What is one drop of Water to the vast Collections of it that are in the large Ocean? What is a little gnat to the whole Universe? So is all the affliction of this life which passes away, when compared with the glory which is to come: And yet a grain of sand is something in respect of the whole earth; and a drop is not altogether nothing, tho compared with the Ocean; for by a continual heaping of grain upon grain, it were possible to make a Globe as great as the Earth; and the Ocean might be emptied of its Water; but Eternity cannot be diminished; it suffers no changes; after Millions of Years in Happiness, it will be as sweet and as comfortable as it was the first moment. It is the Length of our Troubles and our Pain, that makes them more grievous: And as when we do not sleep, the night seems very long, and the doleful hours of our sickness seem to move with a much slower pace than those of our pleasant health. Thus *Job* discourses as if his time, being clogg'd with miseries, seem'd an Eternity, Job 7 15, 16. *My soul chuseth strangling, and death rather than life; I loath it, I would not live always; let me alone, for my days are vanity*: He was weary of being in so long pain; and thought that his afflicted life would never have an end: But yet all *the afflictions of the present time, are not worthy to be compared with that glory which shall be revealed*, Rom. 8. 18. We are near to a Blessed Change; and who would not undergo the dangers of a troublesome Voyage for a month, if he knew that he should return laden

laden with great Treaſures to his home, and live in Splendor ever after? What a pleaſure is it to ſuch as are beſieged, to know that they ſhall certainly be relieved in a little time? It cauſes them, tho preſs'd very cloſe by their Enemies, to reſume a new Courage, and to hearten one another. So ſhould it be with all Believers; the day of their Lord's coming draws near, and then he will put all their Enemies to the flight, and reward their Diligence and Perſeverance: The Enemy of our Souls is full of Rage; but that which fills him with fury, may yield us comfort, even becauſe we know that *his time is ſhort. The God of peace will bruiſe Satan under your feet ſhortly*, Rom. 16.20. Oh what comfortable words are theſe! that enemy that fills us with vexation, and whoſe malice is both great and conſtant, ſhall in a little time not moleſt nor interrupt our ſatisfactions any more. Your tears that you ſhed for your offences now, are very juſt; 'tis what we owe to God for having ſinned ſo much againſt him; but ſhortly we ſhall be with him, and never complain of his abſence from us any more: When a man is toſt with ſtorms, and ſees no proſpect of the ſhore, 'tis very diſmal; but it is not ſo with us who have our Haven in our view: What if our troubles ſhould continue for Twenty or Thirty Years? this would be very overwhelming to our ſenſe; and yet it is nothing when compared with an Eternity of Joys above: How ſoon will this be over? but how long will that remain? It caſts a great damp upon all things under the Sun, that they are unſatisfying, and that they are very ſhort; how

pleaſant ſoever they are to us, they will depart: Our Friends, and all the Delight of their Converſation; our Riches, and all the Reſpect and Service they procure us, will fade away: Our beloved Bodies, which we maintain with great Expence and Care, will leave us, and muſt go into the Grave; but our Happineſs will be for ever; it is *Eternal Happineſs*, and what that is, our thoughts cannot comprehend, nor our words expreſs; we ſhall then know what it is, when we are in actual Poſſeſſion of it. To be *for ever with the Lord*, what an encouragement does this afford to Patience and Reſignation? To be with him, who is our Portion, and our all; to be with him, and to be without our ſin that provoked him to wrath, and made our ſpirits ſad; what an Heaven will this be! As this life by its tedious afflictions ſeems to thoſe that are in diſtreſs to be as an Eternity; ſo the pleaſures of that undecaying life will ſeem but a moment to us, it will be ſo very pleaſant; and we are near to it: Tho the pains that forerun our departure, prove to be very ſharp, yet in a moment death, whenever it comes, will be paſt; in a moment we ſhall ſee the face of God that was hid from us here; we ſhall be changed as in the twinkling of an eye; and when we are in that Eternity, ſhall we then ſay, that we cleanſed our hearts in vain? Shall we not then ſee, that we had no cauſe to murmur or repine? All our Faculties will be gratified with proper Objects, and with ſuitable Employment; and all overſpread and ſwallowed up with a quick and a lively Joy. Oh how bleſſed are the Tears

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that will lead us to ſuch a Joy? Bleſſed is the Croſs that will yield us ſuch fruit as this; and bleſſed be that God who will beſtow ſuch a reward upon us: When we come there, we ſhall ſing in the conſideration of thoſe very afflictions that, while we were on earth, made us ſigh and groan. It is good to be there; and how freely ſhould we ſuffer our thoughts always to dwell upon the pleaſant Subject, but that our worldly buſineſs, and the neceſſary affairs of Life, call us away from the Mountain of our Transfiguration? However let us not forget, that theſe things are the Truths of God, which he hath ſhewed to his ſervants, and which ſhall ſhortly come to paſs; and they are very near too; and ſhould have a ſuitable influence upon us. How did the Martyrs of old rejoice, when they ſaw the day wherein they were to ſuffer? How did they embrace and encourage one another, ſaying, We want but an hour or two of Heaven: We have but one combat more to finiſh, and we ſhall be with Chriſt: We dine upon bitter Herbs, but we ſhall ſup with him: Ere the Crowd that came to ſee us dye, be diſperſt, we ſhall be with God, and with innumerable Angels, and the ſpirits of the Juſt: With what calmneſs have the bleſſed Sufferers bid this world adieu, ſaying, Farewel Sun, Moon, and Stars, and welcome better Lights: Farewel Wives and Children, Friends and Acquaintance: Farewel ye deceiving Pleaſures of the World; and now welcome ye joys of Paradiſe; welcome thou ſweet Croſs of Chriſt; and welcome death that will convey us thither: And thus their

ſouls were driven in Chariots of Fire to their Father's Houſe: Whether there be Muſick in the Revolution of the Celeſtial Spheres, as ſome of the Philoſophers imagined, we know not; but 'tis very likely that the ſeparated ſoul of the Patient and Triumphant Chriſtian, will have thoſe Angels that rejoiced at its Converſion, that wait to carry it to its bleſſed Home, to preſent it to the Throne of God, with joyful Praiſes, and united Hallelujahs: Thus we ſhould admire and imitate the Patience of the Saints, whoſe Life was begun with darkneſs and ſorrow, but ended with Light and Pleaſure; began with a Combat, but concluded with Victory: And then ſhall the Soul that a few moments before was diſconſolate, have cauſe to ſay in that day, *Iſa.* 12. 1, 2. *O Lord, I will praiſe thee; tho thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comforteſt me. Behold, God is my ſalvation, the Lord Jehovah is my ſtrength, and my ſong; he alſo is become my ſalvation.*

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Great Love of Chriſt in ſuffering the wrath of God in his Soul; which is the more to be admired, in that he bore it for us, and not for the fallen Angels; and becauſe now he is from his own experience more qualified to relieve us under all our temptations.

Inſ. 3. HOW great cauſe have we to value Jeſus Chriſt, who by ſuffering the wrath of God in his own perſon, has procured this priviledge for Believers, That the Anger of God towards them ſhall be only for a moment? Had it not been for his ſpotleſs ſatisfaction, the Divine Juſtice would have perpetually flam'd out againſt us; and he would not only have been angry with us now, but for ever. He has delivered us *from the wrath to come.*

That which is eaſy to us upon our Faith, was purchaſed by him at a very dear Price; he ſhed his own Blood to obtain Peace and Mercy for us. Oh how great was the Burden of that heavy Croſs which he bore for us? how terrible and amazing was that wrath which he felt in his bitter and his doleful agonies, when he ſaw not one Smile in his Father's face; when it was with him an hour of thick darkneſs; and when under the ſmart of what he felt, and the view of what he was to feel, he ſaid, *My Soul is exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death?* And when

the agonies of his Soul did affect his Body, and made it even in a cold Seaſon to ſweat as it were drops of Blood? What a gloomy time was that when he fell upon his face, and in a ſorrowful poſture, with ſtrong Cries and Tears prayed, *O my Father, if it be poſſible, let this Cup paſs from me?* What flaming wrath was that which ſcorcht him, when he uttered thoſe dreadful words, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* The Angel told *Mary*, That a Sword ſhould pierce through her Son, *Luk.* 2. 35. to ſee what injurious uſage her Soul met withal; but how much ſharper was the Sword that pierc'd the Soul of Chriſt himſelf? The wrath that he bore, would have totally overwelm'd and deſtroyed Angels and Men, had they joyned their ſtrength together. There was none but he that was able to ſuſtain ſuch a Combat, and to bear ſuch a Load. Oh where had we guilty Creatures been, had not he dyed for us! God would have been our Enemy, and Hell our Portion: His Holineſs would not allow him to be gracious to us, without a Satisfaction; and there was none that was able to make it, but his own dearly beloved Son; and this excellent Perſon freely did it. And what cauſe have we to *admire the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, of this Love, which paſſes Knowledg!* *Eph.* 3. 18. Angels in Heaven wonder at it, it was ſo great in it ſelf, and accompliſhed in ſuch a painful and a coſtly way: and we may juſtly be fill'd with a wondring joy, for we are more concern'd, and our Sin and Guilt makes us to need it more than they do. There was nothing in us to move him

him to begin, or to finiſh, the bleſſed work of our Redemption; nothing but miſery: He ſaw us loſt, and he came to find us: He ſaw us periſhing, his bowels earned within him, and his own Pity and Compaſſion made him to come and ſave us. What puniſhment had we deſerved for our manifold tranſgreſſions? And he came and bore the puniſhment that was our due, and diſcharg'd that debt which we were never able to pay. How kind was he, that thought not his own Life, nor his own Blood, too much for us? Who ever expos'd his Perſon and his Life for an Enemy? and yet he dyed for us when we were ſo; as marvellous an Act of Mercy, as if a Prince's Son ſhould lay his Head upon the block to ſave one that had rebell'd againſt the Crown and Government of his own Father: What does he require from us for all that he has done? he asks nothing but our Love, and ſhall we not give him our beſt Affections, our higheſt thoughts, and our hearts, which he has ſo dearly bought? have even any of thoſe things to which we give our love, done ſo much for us as he has done? He has the beſt Title, and will prove our trueſt Friend in the latter end; had it not been for him, we could never have prayed to God with hope, nor liv'd without a fearful expectation of Vengeance: We were Children of wrath, and muſt, but for him, have been the Heirs of wrath too. Who would not love ſuch a Benefactor? Who would not give him all, who gave himſelf for us? It is by his death that God is appeas'd, and that his Anger is but for a Moment to thoſe who receive his Son:

Son: God hath ſmelt a ſweet ſavour in this Sacrifice, and is highly pleaſed with it, and is pleas'd with us upon this account. He does not now follow us with wrath, but invites us to himſelf in mercy; he has ſheath'd his flaming Sword, and is ready to embrace us in his Arms; and though he ſees nothing in us to excite his goodneſs, yet every time he looks upon our bleſſed Lord, he ſees one who has entirely pleaſed him, who has done his will, and who is the beloved of his Soul, and it's for his ſake that his anger towards us is ſo long delayed; and that when it comes, it is but for a Moment. Let us love this Redeemer with all our hearts, remembring that terrible ſentence of our Apoſtle, *If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be Anathema Maranatha, i. e.* Curſed till he come again. 1 *Cor.* 16. 22. There are two things that ſhould engage us to love him, for his bearing the wrath of God.

1. That he bore it for us, and not for the fallen Angels.

2. That from his own experience he is able to help us under all our temptations, and when we are under the ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure.

1. Chriſt bore not the wrath of God for the fallen Angels; they fell from him as we did, but he deſigns not to raiſe them again; they groan'd under the wrath of the mighty Judge, and they muſt always groan under it; no beam of chearful Light will ſhine into their Dungeon; no Meſſenger will be diſpatched to give them the

the glad-tidings of Salvation; the anger of God threw them out of Heaven, and the door is for ever ſhut; they know this to be their woful Caſe, and therefore they rage againſt him, and againſt his Servants, and his Intereſt in the world. What could move Chriſt, to take the nature of Man, and not of Angels? *Heb.* 2. 16. to ſay to us, Live, and to ſuffer them to dye? to viſit our ſinning World, to ſet us at Liberty, to ſet open the Priſon-doors, whilſt he ſuffers them to roar in chains of wrath? As they have greater Capacities, and Natures more knowing than ours; ſo they might have honoured their Creator more than we, had they been redeemed; but they muſt mourn for ever, and never ſing his Praiſe; they muſt grieve whilſt we rejoice, whilſt we look for our Lord, they tremble in the fear of his coming; whilſt we have the ſweetneſs of hope, they are in anguiſh and vexation, in deſpair and horror; we have our Sabbaths, but they have no days of reſt; we can through Jeſus Chriſt call God our Father, but they know him not by ſuch a comfortable Name; they feel his Power, but they taſt not his Love; they tremble under his Vengeance, but all comfort and Joy is fled away from them for ever; why are we in the light, and they in darkneſs? Why is Chriſt a Phiſician to us, whilſt he is a Judge to them? truly nothing makes the difference but his own love; and what manner of love is this!

2. It was great love in Chriſt to bear the anger of God, becauſe now his poor tempted Servants have one to whom they may repair in all their ſtraits. *Heb.* 2. 18. *For in that he himſelf*

ſelf hath ſuffered, being tempted, he is able to ſuccor them that are tempted. 'Tis a great relief to the miſerable and afflicted, to be pitied by others; as *Job.* 19. 21. *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me*: It is ſome relief when others, tho they cannot help us, yet ſeem to be truly concerned for the ſadneſs of our caſe, when by the kindneſs of their words, and of their actions, they do a little ſmooth the wounds that they cannot heal; but it is an unſpeakable addition to the Croſs, when a man is brought low under the ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure, to have men to mock at his Calamity, or to revile him, or to ſpeak roughly; this does enflame and exaſperate the wound that was big enough before; and it is an hard thing when one has a dreadful ſound in his ears, to have every friend to become a Son of Thunder: It is a ſmall matter for people that are at eaſe, to deal ſeverely with ſuch as are afflicted; but they little know how their ſevere ſpeeches, and their angry words pierce them to the very ſoul: 'Tis eaſie to blame others for complaining, but if ſuch had felt but for a little while what it is to be under the fear of God's Anger, they would find they could not but complain. It cannot but make any perſon very reſtleſs and uneaſie, when he apprehends that God is his Enemy. It is no wonder if he makes every one that he ſees, and every place that he is in, a witneſs of his grief; but now it is a Comfort in our Temptations and in our Fears, that we have ſo compaſſionate a Friend as Chriſt is, to whom we may repair. *Heb.* 4. 15. *For we have not an*

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High-Prieſt which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without ſin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in every time of need. Had it not been for his Mediation, the abſolute and pure Deity would have been too glorious and inacceſſible to us; but he is cloathed with our nature; and though it has undergone ſeveral alterations, ſince he is exalted; yet we are ſure that he retains a tender ſence of our miſeries: And tho he be very high, he does not think it below him to regard the moſt troubled and ſorrowful Believer: He was on earth acquainted with grief, *Iſa.* 53. 3. And has carryed to Heaven with him a remembrance of what he felt in his own Temptations, and of what he felt when his Father frown'd upon him; and his own experience renders him more capable of helping us; and makes him full of pity, when he ſees us mourn; well knowing what was his own Caſe. As God has faſhioned the hearts of all men, and ſome who have naturally more mercy and pity than others; and then the holy Spirit by its renewing grace, carrying their good Diſpoſitions to greater degrees, and proceeding, and working uſually according to their tempers; ſo it is certain he temper'd the heart of Chriſt, and made it of a ſofter mould than all the tenderneſs of all the men in the world put together, would have made it: he had ſuch a humane nature, that might be more merciful than all Men and Angels together, *Goodwin, Chriſt's Heart in Heaven. p.* 55. Our groans and our ſighs

ſighs reach his Heart above; and tho he does not come with help juſt when we deſire it, yet he is providing for our welfare, he ſends us ſome inward ſupports, when we have not an immediate deliverance: he will not ſuffer us totally to ſink, tho he may leave us for a while to try our faith, or to let us underſtand our own weakneſs; we may think that our veſſel will be covered with waves, when he is guiding us to ſhore; even when we think that he is aſleep and has forgot us, and cares not though we be caſt away: only let us never ceaſe to ſay, *Maſter, ſave us, or elſe we periſh.*

CHAP. V.

Shewing the unreaſonableneſs of long-continued angers among good People; as alſo, that the temporary effects of God's diſpleaſure, are more elegible than the wrath of Men. Of the Excellency of Religion; and that the Enemies of the Church have no cauſe to inſult over it, becauſe of its certain deliverance, and the diſmal Concluſion of their own Wickedneſs; upon which account Chriſtians have no Reaſon to envy their Proſperity.

Inf. 2. SEeing God is angry but for a moment, How unreaſonable are long-continued Angers among good People? *Let not the ſun go*

down

down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil, Eph. 4. 26, 27. *i. e.* he that has injured or provoked another, muſt come to a Temper, and ſue for a Reconciliation ſpeedily, or elſe before the time of ſolemn praying to God, which was conſtantly at Evening, and ſo the Exhortation bears proportion with that, Matth. 5. 23, 24. *If thou bringeſt thy gift unto the altar, and there remembreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt thee, leave there thy gift, and firſt be reconciled to thy brother.* See Dr. *Hammond* in *loc.* It is a ſtrange thing that any good people ſhould be ſo paſſionate and haſty, as ſome are; they are quickly enraged, and hard to be reconcil'd; and there are many that will keep their Anger for ſeveral months, and it may be years together. Oh! how unlike is this to that God whom they call their Father in Heaven, who is ſlow to Wrath, and whoſe Anger towards them is but for a moment! And what an Honour, and a Priviledge would it be to reſemble him? If he were not more patient with his Creatures, and his Children, than they are with one another, What Confuſions, what woful Puniſhments would the World be filled withal? *Anger reſts in the boſom of fools*, Eccleſ. 7. 9. Your haſty paſſionate people are commonly the weaker ſort of Chriſtians; and tho the ſtrong muſt pity their weakneſs, and bear with them, yet they muſt not bear with themſelves, but pray and ſtrive againſt it, and not coin Excuſes to defend that which is inexcuſable, which is a reproach to Religion, and in it ſelf a great Sin. A good Man may be ſurpriz'd on a ſudden, and put into

into a fret; but to be always fretting, and uneaſy, and diſpleaſed with thoſe that have injured you, is a thing very unſuitable to the Example of your bleſſed and your meek Saviour; what pleaſure can ſuch take in hearing that their Enemies abroad loſe the day, when they have a worſe Enemy in their own breaſts, that leads them Captive, and takes them at the firſt aſſault? The worſt Enemies in this ſenſe, are thoſe of a Man's own houſe. And it is a wonder that thoſe perſons who appear to be very Conſcientious in other things, yet indulge themſelves in this; they give place to the Devil, and he caſts a miſt before their Eyes; and tho he cannot keep them from fearing other Sins, yet he ſo cheats them with falſe pretences, that they do not believe raſh Anger to be a Sin, or are eaſily drawn to the Commiſſion of it. What differences have been kept up in Churches, in Families, among Acquaintance and Friends, for a long ſpace together, whoſe Anger ſhould have been like that of God, but for a moment? They conſider not aright their own duty, nor the infirmity of Mankind, and how moſt of their Errors are to be cured in a loving, and and a gentle manner. We are unwilling to pardon our Enemies, or the Injuries of our Friends, and God is moſt ready to forgive us all. Eph. 4. 32. *Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Chriſt's ſake hath forgiven you.* There are, it may be, ſome Angers that have laſted ten or twelve years, and what Eſtrangement, what Diſtance, what Shineſs is there among ſuch? It may be ſpoken

to

to their ſhame. How hardly will Men that have received an Injury, ſpeak well of the Perſons that have given them, perhaps but a ſlight provocation? They'll have no Commerce, nor Familiarity with them; but, is this a bleſſing of thoſe that curſe us, and a praying for thoſe that diſpightfully uſe us? Is this an Imitation of our Gracious God, that has forgiven us all, innumerable provocations? I mention not here your brave Fellows, that upon every ſmall Affront, are for challenging another to give them Satisfaction, that are ſo weak, that they cannot agree without a Duel; whom a falſe notion of Honour puſhes forward to thoſe raſh enterpriſes, that are condemned both by the Laws of God, and the Laws of Men. And is not he a ſtout man who has the courage to trample upon the authority of his Maker, and his Rulers too; who dares venture his damnation, to preſerve his Reputation; and hazards the ſending of his own Soul, or that of his friend, to Hell, to keep him from the name of Cowardiſe on Earth? What a low value have theſe perſons of their lives, that throw them away meerly to ſatisfy their own paſſion? And in what poſture or preparation is that man for dying, that dyes to ſatisfy his own Revenge? It would be more honourable to forgive a fault, than to purſue it after ſuch a bloody manner; but you have not ſo learned Chriſt, *Jam.* 1. 19. *Wherefore my beloved brethren, let every man be ſwift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak, ſlow to wrath; for the wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſs of God.*

Inf. 3. Seeing the anger of God is but for a moment,

ment, then 'tis better as to the temporal effects of it, to fall into the hands of God, than into the hands of Men. We may ſay of all wicked men, what *Jacob* ſays of *Simeon* and *Levi*, *Gen.* 49. 5. *Inſtruments of cruelty are in their habitations. O my ſoul, come not thou into their ſecret: unto their aſſembly mine honour be not thou united: Curſed be their anger, for it is fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel; their tender mercies are cruelty*, Prov. 12. 10. Wicked men are ſoon tranſported into violent paſſions; and when they are armed with a power ſuitable to their Rage, what horrible effects does it then produce? they are inſpired with barbarous Principles and Deſigns, by an evil ſpirit, that delights in miſchief: And he communicates to them of his own Fury; And what is it that they then ſcruple? Nothing ſoftens or makes impreſſions on their cruel hearts: Of theſe the ſeveral Maſſacres there have been in *Ireland*, and *Piedmont*, and *France* have been ſad inſtances; they ſpared not the aged, the feeble, the ſick, the young; no Age or Sex but felt the woful effects of their wrath and rage; they have torn poor harmleſs Infants from their Mothers Breaſts, others they have killed in the Womb; ſome they have cut in pieces, others they have put to long Tortures and Lingring Deaths; and were nor moved at all with the hideous cries of Parents, that dyed ſeveral deaths in beholding their Children dye; and then when their eyes had beheld the ſad Spectacle, had their own Blood ſhed. Oh what a vaſt difference is there between the temporary Anger of God as to outward evils, and that of men? He no ſooner

ſees

ſees us at his feet, but his bowels earn over us, and he raiſes us up with his hand, and bids us be of good cheer; but theſe cruel men delight to trample on the poor and the deſolate: He hears our cries when we pray, but they are deaf to all the entreaties and ſupplications of afflicted and miſerable People; they ſet themſelves to invent methods of Torture, to make thoſe that are within their power to dye with greater pain and ſorrow; but *God does not willingly grieve, nor afflict the children of men.* Their wrath is unruly, does aſſign it ſelf no bounds; they know no moderation; they forbear nothing that tends to gratify their Luſts; but it is a comfort that our God is of Great power, and his mercies are infinite; men go about that work, which God ſometimes permits them to do, with cruel intentions to ruin and deſtroy; but God with a deſign in all his Corrections to purify and reform, and to do us good in the latter end, 2 *Sam.* 24. 13, 14. *Gad came to David, and told him, Shall ſeven years of famine come unto thee in thy Land? Or wilt thou flee three Months before thine enemies, while they purſue thee? or that there be three days peſtilence in thy land? Now adviſe, and ſee what anſwer I ſhall return to him that ſent me. And David ſaid unto Gad, I am in a great ſtrait: let us fall now into the hand of the Lord, for his mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man.*

Inf. 4. What a good Maſter is God, whoſe anger is but for a moment? other Maſters may be haſty, and froward, and hard to pleaſe; but he is patient and ſlow to wrath; he is never

angry till we diſobey his voice, and by our Lazineſs in his work, force him to it; and even then his nature enclines him to moderate our ſtripes; and he adds no more, than what are neceſſary to promote our good; he treats us not as ſlaves, but exerciſes toward us a mild and a favourable Government: He threatens a long while, before he puniſhes; the clouds gather blackneſs, to give us notice of a coming Storm; and the Thunder of his wrath, as well as that of nature, doth roar before it falls: he threatens, and adviſes, and perſwades, and uſes ſeveral affectionate expoſtulations with us, before we feel the Rod; and when in vindicating his own right, he ſeems to be very Juſt, he ceaſes not at the ſame time, to be very Good; we frequently provoke him, and he is moſt ready to forgive; he ſeeks not advantages againſt us, nor waits for our halting; it grieves him when we ſin, and he is only angry that we may repent; he delights in peace, and not in war; in the manifeſtations of his Mercy and Love, more than in the terrible diſcoveries of his wrath: He whets his Sword before he ſtrikes, that in the preparations of his Judgments, we may ſee what we may expect, and ſeek to prevent them: He ſummons us to ſurrender our ſelves, before he begins to make us, by ſharper methods, to be ſenſible of our follies; and whilſt his Rod is in his hand, he ſtays to ſee if we will even then return; and he is unwilling to puniſh, even when he is forced to do it; as a tender Judge does with ſorrow and regret, pronounce Sentence upon a Malefactor, *Hoſ.* 11. 8. *How ſhall I give*

thee

thee up, O Ephraim? how ſhall I deliver thee, Iſrael? Pſal. 78. 38. *Many a time he turned his anger away.* He recall'd, or order'd his anger to return, (as one expreſſes it) as if he were unreſolved what to do; he recalled it, as a man does his Servant ſeveral times, when he is ſending him upon an unwelcome Meſſage; or as a tender-hearted Prince trembles, when he is to ſign a Writ for the death of a Rebel, that had been before his Favourite; he blots out his name again, and flings away the Pen: He ſingles out here and there ſome of his Servants, when he might puniſh all for their ſins; he makes one ſmart, to be a warning to the reſt; and according to the Doctrine of the Schoolmen, He recompences good works far above their merit; but he puniſhes Crimes far below their demerit. He makes his Mercy to triumph over Judgment; he puniſhes with regret, and he retains a great deal of his wrath when he corrects, but he keeps no meaſure when he rewards; and the miſeries of the miſerable are not greater, than the joy and happineſs of the bleſſed. Oh! who would not ſerve ſo gracious and ſo good a Maſter as God is? and who is long before he is angry, and who is ſoon appeaſed again? Are the cruel commands of Satan, the ſlavery of the World, the defilement of Sin, to be preferred to the gentle and the pure Commands of God? How many Curſe their folly in adhearing to theſe! but none repent that they have been employed in his ſervice. His moſt Aged Servants find the greateſt Honour and delight in having ſerved him very long, and would not quit their experienced and kind

Maſter for all the World: They know that his Corrections are ſhort, but his Love is Everlaſting; his wrath is for a moment, but their Heaven will be for ever.

Inf. 5. The Enemies of the Church of God have no Reaſon to inſult over ſuch as are afflicted in it; for tho God for their ſins is angry, *yet his anger is but for a moment.* Thus they treated *David*, Pſal. 41. 1. *All that hate me whiſper againſt me; an evil diſeaſe, ſay they, cleaveth to him; and now that he lieth, he ſhall riſe up no more.* And Pſal. 42. 3. *My tears have been my meat day and night, while they ſay continually unto me, Where is thy God?* They thought him entirely forſaken, and abandon'd for ever; putting theſe Queſtions to him, What is now become of thy God, in whom thou waſt wont to boaſt? Where is he now whom thou didſt once call thy refuge and thy hiding-place? Where is his power and his goodneſs, that he leaves thee to ſuch a deep and violent affliction? In alluſion to that of *Shimei*, 2 Sam. 16. 6, 7, 8. *Thus ſaid Shimei when he curſed, Come out thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: The Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the houſe of Saul, in whoſe ſtead thou haſt reigned; and the Lord hath delivered the Kingdom into the hand of Abſalom thy Son: Behold, thou art taken in thy miſchiefs, becauſe thou art a bloody man.* This bold Man put a wicked interpretation on the Providence of God; and becauſe *David* met with ſo many troubles, and ſuch interruption in his Affairs, ere the Kingdom was well ſetled in his hand, he thought that

that God was againſt him; but he lived to ſit with proſperity on the Throne for many years togeſher; and *Shimei* had leiſure enough wherein to repent of his fooliſh and extravagant reproaches of ſo good a King. Thus the Barbarians thought that *Paul* had been a Murderer, becauſe a Viper fixed upon his hand, and that vengeance had purſued him for ſome great offence; till he ſhook it off, and taught them to ſee how ill-grounded their opinion was, and that the God they thought his Enemy, did aſſiſt him to work Miracles. When you ſee any greatly afflicted, and groaning under a ſenſe of the wrath of God, you ought rather to tremble than to rejoyce; to weep than to laugh; to conſider how holy and how juſt God is, ſeeing he will not ſpare even his own, for all his Elect ſhall at one time or other taſte the bitterneſs of ſin. You that were never ſerious, have reaſon to humble your ſelves, and to think what may you expect, when his Children are Corrected after ſo ſevere a manner; If his own Family ſuffer ſuch afflictions, what has he then in ſtore for his open Enemies? If the righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the ungodly and the ſinner appear? *Prov.* 24. 17, 18. *Rejoyce not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he ſtumbleth, leſt the Lord ſee it, and it diſpleaſe him, and he turn away his wrath from him.* Entertain not a ſecret pleaſure in the downfall and diſtreſs of any Man whatſoever; for theſe inhuman affections are ſo diſpleaſing to God, that they may provoke him to tranſlate the Calamity from thy

Enemy unto thee, and thereby damp thy ſinful joy with a double ſorrow; firſt to ſee him delivered from his trouble, and then to find thy ſelf involved in it: See *Patr. Paraph. in loc.* Do not triumph over any in affliction, leſt the Cup be taken out of their hand, and put into yours. Do not with the Friends of *Job*, cenſure them for greater ſinners than any in the World, becauſe of their ſorer Tryals; as if you were acquainted with the ſecrets of the Decrees of God, and could pierce, with your ſhallow Reaſon, into the bottom of his unfathomable Judgments. Thoſe that are under an apprehenſion of the Divine diſpleaſure, know that it is for ſin; it is that which troubles and afflicts them more than any thing beſides; but you ought not to conclude that they are ſinners beyond the reſt of Men; but rather wonder at the Goodneſs of God, that he is gracious and more favourable to any, when they all deſerve to dye. Do not, by reproachful Language, add affliction to thoſe that are afflicted. Zech. 1. 15. *I am very ſore diſpleaſed with the heathen that are at eaſe, for I was but a little diſpleaſed; and they helped forward the affliction.* It was the cruel inſulting of wicked Men over her miſeries, of which the Church was ſenſible, when ſhe ſays, Mic. 7. 8. *Rejoyce not againſt me, O my enemy; when I fall, I ſhall ariſe; when I ſet in darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a light unto me.*

Inf. 6. How much happier is the condition of a good Man, than of one that ſhall remain impenitent in his wickedneſs? He is angry with the

the one for a moment; but with the other he will be ſo for ever. The Servants of God have never ſo much cauſe to mourn under the ſenſe of the heinouſneſs and aggravation of their Sins, as they have cauſe to rejoyce in the riches and the freeneſs of his Grace; They have never ſo much cauſe to be troubled at their own diſtreſs, as to ſing at the remembrance of his holineſs; They have cauſe to weep indeed, becauſe they have provok'd ſo good a God to wrath; and to be glad that his anger is but for a moment. They have cauſe to be concerned that they have made him to frown; but cauſe to rejoyce that he will ſmile on them for ever. The Righteous have a bitter Cup; but as 'tis here mingled with love, ſo it prepares them for a ſweeter taſt of heavenly pleaſure. *In the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red: it is full of mixture, and he poureth out of the ſame: but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth ſhall wring them out, and drink them*, Pſal. 75. 8. God does correct his own here with meaſure; but his puniſhments of the wicked will know no bounds; wrath ſhall come upon them to the utmoſt, and how low muſt they ſink, and what a load muſt they bear who have a God to puniſh them, whoſe Being is Eternal, and whoſe Power is Omnipotent? On his own he frowns for a ſeaſon, and he does it to bring them to their Duty; but on his obſtinate, unrelenting enemies, he will frown for ever. He will abhor them, he will caſt them out of his preſence, trample upon them in his fury, and leave them to be the

Brands

Brands of Hell, and the Prey of Devils. Now indeed, we cannot with all the Terrors of the Lord, which are terrible beyond expreſſion, perſwade Men to repent, tho' we tell them death and deſtruction is at hand, tho' we ſhew them the threats of the Scripture, the Examples of their evil predeceſſors that are gone to their own place; they ſlumber on, tho' we tell them of the danger, and of a Pit that is opening its mouth to ſwallow them up, tho we ſee wrath gathering, and the Clouds ready to burſt, and bid them make haſte to get a ſhelter before the Storm come; tho we bid them flye for their Lives, out of *Sodom*, they ſtill linger and delay: But after death, they cannot, if they would, be ſecure; they will then have no pillows whereon to reſt their heads, no water to quench their thirſt, no friend to help them, no God to hear their Cries; they cannot then ſtop their ears at the roaring Wrath of God; they cannot then ſtupifie their Conſciences, nor put the evil day far off: Now they make a ſhift to ſtifle the checks of their own conſciences, they mock at the Threats of God, and deride his Meſſage; but, Sinners, you ſhall ſadly know, what a dreadful and a terrible God you provoke to wrath; all your Entertainments and Diverſions, all your Mirth and Laughter, all your carnal Comforts, and your jolly Company will be gone, and be gone for ever: And what will then remain? nothing but Conſternation, Amazement, and Woe; nothing but Anguiſh and Tribulation. Who ſhall ſpeak comfortably to you? who ſhall deliver when you are fallen into the hands

hands of the Living God? when you ſhall find that God, that is a gracious Father to the Saints, to be a ſevere Judge to you; when he who is the Joy of their Hearts, ſhall depart from you; and he who refreſhes them with the Smiles of his Face, ſhall kill you with his Frowns: What will you do, when the full Wrath of God ſhall be poured on your guilty Souls? Where will you turn, when it ſhall ſcorch and burn you, and ſet you all on Fire? How will it overwhelm you, when you find that all your hideous Cries, all your Lamentations and your Groans, are to no purpoſe? When you are in the power of cruel Devils, and meet with no pity from God, none from his Angels or his Saints? We think it long to be in pain for a month or two, or for a year; but how long will they think it to be, who are to be in pain throughout all the durations of a ſad Eternity? We think it long when we ſleep not in the night, and wiſh for the light of day: But Oh what a long night will that be, and how uncomfortable, that will have no morning; that will not be ſucceeded with a a Beam of Day for ever! Men do now think an hour or two in attendance upon God, to be a great while; they think Faſt-days and Sabbaths to be long; but if they come to that miſery, Oh how long and how tedious will they find Hell to be! How inſupportable it is, and how unavoidable! Hear therefore, all you that live in ſin; hear and live; oh do not throw your ſelves down that Precipice, under which there is a Sea of Wrath, and a Lake of Fire: O do not wound, nor deſtroy, nor torment your own Souls;

Souls; do not carry fuel to that Fire which will never be quenched; do not run into the Furnace out of which there is no eſcape; for the Lord's ſake, and for your own ſake, and for the ſake of your friends that would fain ſee you to become Religious, awake and call every one of you upon your God; ſeek him while he may be found, hear his voice while it is called to day, leſt the God that alone can help you, laugh at your Calamity; leſt he that is now ſo merciful, hereafter take pleaſure in your Puniſhment; if you will forget your danger, and ſleep on, know when you are in Hell, you will be then forced to open your eyes, and they muſt never be cloſed again. Oh what a dreadful and amazing ſight will you then ſee; when you ſee the Great God to be your Enemy, the Devil to be your Tormentor, damned Souls to be your Companions, and Everlaſting Fire to be your own Portion! God will not then repent of the evil, he will not then ſend his Meſſengers with glad tidings any more: What will you do in the day of the Lord? Nahum 1. 5, 6. *The mountains quake at him, the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his preſence; yea, the world and all that dwell therein; who can ſtand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceneſs of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.* Have we not ſome repreſentation of the Terror of the great day, in ſome greater Thunders that make us tremble, that with their Noiſe and Lightning, make the Inhabitants of this Earth to be aſtoniſht? *The voice of the Lord is powerful,*

powerful, and full of majeſty ; the voice of the Lord rends the air, and ſends out flames of fire, Pſal. 29.4. But what a more terrible ſeaſon will that be, when we ſhall hear the Voice of the laſt Trumpet, ſaying, *Ariſe ye dead, and come to judgment* : When the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, when the Sun ſhall be turned into Darkneſs, and the Moon into Blood! When the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven, and this admired Earth ſhall be full of Convulſions and Violent Agitations! when the Seas ſhall roar, and the Graves open, and the Judge appear in the Clouds! when you ſhall hear the Cracks and the Groans of the diſſolving world! where will you ſinners hide your heads, what will you then think of the Wrath of God, in that great and that terrible day? You will then wiſh, that you had never been born. Oh how happy would you then reckon your ſelves, might you but go into the Grave again: Oh how happy, if you could but dye ; but it will flye from you ; this is that Hell where the wicked muſt live, and ever live, tho it be in miſery. Oh little do you think what you do when you ſin ; you are like a man that ſhould be drinking at the edge of a Furnace, into which he were to be thrown when he had drank a few glaſſes off: Like a Malefactor that is jolly and merry over-night, aud is to be executed the next day. Then you ſhall ſee that it ſhall be well with the Righteous, tho it go ill with you. Judge of things now, as they will appear to be at that day ; join your ſelves to that Society among which you would then be found: Judge of Religion as it will then appear. Here

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it ſeems, through the many afflictions and ſorrows that attend it, not to be ſuch a lovely thing; but then it will appear in its true Luſtre and its fulleſt Beauty. Here you ſee many times a true Servant of God brought very low, complaining of his Iniquities; now you hear his Groans, but a moment hence you ſhall hear his Praiſes and his Hallelujahs. It is night with him now, but a Moment hence you ſhall ſee him Triumph in Eternal day. He is now in a ſtrange land; but ſhortly he will be with his God at reſt in Heaven; and happy is he that gets to ſuch a Bleſſedneſs; though he go out with a ſad Heart and weeping Eyes, and meet with broken Bones, and many a trembling diſpenſation in his way thither. What courſe will you take? Which pattern will you chuſe? Will you ſerve God or your own Luſts? Will you have your portion here, or in the World to come? Will you be content with the preſent Afflictions of Religion, in hope of Eternal Joy. Conſider that they are not to be judged the moſt happy men, who fare well for a moment, but thoſe that do ſo for ever. If you ſerve your Sin, you will have pleaſure it may be for a while, but Bitterneſs and Sorrows in the latter end; your farewell will be very terrible. Will you pleaſe your ſelves for a moment, and venture an eternal Wrath? or will you not rather yield your ſelves to a Gracious and a Loving God? and then you ſhall *ſow in tears, but you ſhall reap in joy*; you may feel his anger for a moment, but he will entertain you in his own Kingdom for ever.

Inf. 7.

Inf. 7. We have no cauſe to be offended with the proſperity of the Wicked. 'Tis true, the Righteous are now *ſowing in tears*, but they ſhall *reap in joy*: In a little while it ſhall be the portion of the Ungodly to Mourn and to be Sorrowful. Would you envy a Malefactor that is jovial and pleaſant over night? When you know he is to be led to Execution the next day? His approaching Puniſhment might juſtly ſpoil the reliſh of his own dainties; but however it gives the Spectators no occaſion of grudging him his Drunken joys, ſeeing they are the laſt that the poor man is ever like to have; and a little ſpace obſcures all the gaity of his looks, with an Everlaſting cloud. It is no juſt objection againſt the wiſdom of the Divine Providence, That the good are afflicted, whilſt the Rod of God is not upon the bad. For he gives to the one the Bleſſings of the right hand, the knowledge of Himſelf and their own Duty; whilſt to the other he only gives the Bleſſings of the left hand, Riches, and Honour, and the like goods, which being only outward and for this preſent World, they are not of ſo great a value as thoſe which are Spiritual, and relate to a life to come. We think it fares well with the Wicked, becauſe we do not for the preſent ſee them ſhed ſo many Tears, nor complain after ſo doleful a manner, as the good are often forced to do: But we ſee not in what chains they are held, nor with how many ſtinging thoughts their minds are haraſs'd, all the while they forget God: We ſee not the perplexities to which

which they are reduced by the contrary commands of divers Luſts. If we conſider, that God is *angry with them every day*, and that we know not but in a day or two, they may be cut off and periſh, we ſhall have no cauſe to murmur at their preſent undiſturbed Caſe, and their ſeeming welfare; for their happineſs is not real, but apparent, and all the goods that are beſtow'd upon them, are but mean and low in themſelves, though our erroneous and blinder Judgments, think them to be ſomewhat great, and conſiderable; *Dr.* Scots *Chriſtian life, part* 2. *p.* 255. For conſidering of what little moment the preſent goods and evils are, which good men ſuffer, and bad men enjoy; they ought rather to be lookt on as an argument of God's Wiſdom, than as an objection againſt his Providence; for he underſtands the juſt value of things, and knows that the beſt of theſe worldly goods, are bad enough to be thrown away, upon the worſt of men; and ſo expreſſes his juſt ſcorn of theſe admired vanities, by ſcattering them abroad with a careleſs hand; for why ſhould he partake of the error of vulgar opinion, and expreſs himſelf ſo very regardful of theſe trifles, as to put them in Gold Scales, and weigh them out to mankind by Grains and Scruples? When we ſee therefore bad men to rejoice, and the good to mourn, let us not cenſure, but adore that Providence that will aſſign to them both different portions in another world; thoſe that are healthful, are not more beloved for that; nor are the ſick and weak more hateful to God for thoſe outward troubles that they now ſuffer.

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there are many who have their paradiſe in this world, that ſhall have none hereafter; and there is many an one torn and mangled with the thorns and bryers of the Wilderneſs, to whom God does reſerve a Throne above: We ſee many a Veſſel on whom the Sun ſhines, and which ſails with a fair gale, that yet by ſplitting on a Rock or on the Sand, never reaches the Port: And others we ſee, that meet with nothing but high waves, and contrary winds, and tho' they have an unpleaſant voyage, yet it is, for all that, very ſafe, and attended with comfort in the latter end: The wicked do not always proſper in this life, God ſometimes makes them examples of his Juſtice; and if he do not uſually do ſo to thoſe that are very bad, it affords us a certain ground for the belief which we have of a Judgment that is to come; wherein puniſhments and rewards will be diſtributed after another manner than now they are. This maxim of our Chriſtian Divinity,* That God ſometimes afflicts very ſeverely thoſe whom he tenderly loves, even then, when they well perform their duty, even then, when he is well pleaſed with them, was unknown to the ancient *Iſraelites*. This was a Leſſon above their underſtanding: God did not afflict them, but when they had provoked him by ſome particular tranſgreſſion; but when they did not ſo, they always had a peaceable and happy life; it is not ſo with us; our afflictions are ſometimes indeed not the marks of his Anger, but of his Favour; as when he calls his own out to the enduring of things very bitter and unpleaſant, for the tryal of their patience and

* Fragmens de Serm. de Monſ. Morus, p. 74.

faith; there is none of the Prophets, that does reckon ſuffering among the gifts of God, but our Apoſtle does eſteem them to be ſo, *Phil.* 1. We hear none under the new Teſtament, which gives us a clearer diſcovery of another world, ſay as they did heretofore, *Why doth the way of the Wicked proſper?* but *rather count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations.*

CHAP. VI.

Of the duty of ſuch as never have been under a ſenſe of God's Wrath and Terrors; and what is the doleful condition of a Soul that apprehends it ſelf to be under his hot diſpleaſure.

1. SEeing God is often angry with his own Servants, what cauſe have thoſe of you that fear him, to bleſs him that he is not angry with you, and that you do not feel his diſpleaſure! He ſets up others as his mark againſt which he ſhoots his Arrows; you hear others groaning for his departure, and yet your hearts are not ſadned as theirs are; your eyes can look up towards Heaven with hope, whilſt theirs are clouded with a vail of ſorrow: He ſpeaks roughly to them, but comfortable words to you; he ſeems to ſet himſelf againſt them as his enemies, whilſt he deals with you as a loving Friend; you ſee a reviving-ſmile in his Face, and they can diſcern nothing there, but one continued and dread-

dreadful Frown. Oh admire and for ever wonder at the Soveraign diſtinguiſhing Grace of God; are you that are at eaſe better, than many of his people that are now thrown into a fiery Furnace? Have you leſs droſs than they? Have they ſinned, think you, at an higher rate than you have ever done? He is angry with them for their luke-warmneſs, for their backſliding; and have your hearts always burn'd with Love? have your feet always kept his way, and not declined? have you never wandred? have you never turned aſide to the right hand or to the left? ſurely you have; and therefore what a mercy is it, that he is not angry with you, as well as them! You ſee many whoſe Conſciences for their ſins are turned all into flame and horror and perplexity, full of accuſations, full of guilty fears for their ſinning, their ſinning againſt Light, Knowledge, Mercy, and Love; and have you never ſo ſinned? Have not your Conſciences alſo been defil'd? Have you never done what was evil, when you knew it to be ſo? Have you not been often kindly entertain'd of God, after you have run away from him? Have you not after great Tranſgreſſions met with joy and pleaſure in the ſenſe of his pardoning healing Grace, whilſt others that have been, it may be, more dutiful, did not fare ſo well, nor have ever had ſuch a fatted calf killed for them, nor ſuch feaſts to refreſh their Souls, as there have been prepared for you? You can never ſufficiently bleſs God for his mercy; every day you deſerve his Anger, and yet you have not been under the terrible apprehenſions of it for

a moment. Why are you ſitting at his Table, and honoured with his Preſence in all your Duties, in all your Sufferings, whilſt he is a ſtranger to them, and as a wayfaring Man that tarries but for a night? What is it that makes him to bleſs ſome Children of the Family with greater peace and comfort than he does the reſt? Nothing but his own Grace and Mercy. Some are drawn with Cords of Love, and ſome have their Iniquities conſtantly viſited with Stripes. Some are glad with the hopes of Heaven, and ſome are afraid they ſhall never go thither; and know not by experience what Joy and Pleaſure means. Some have their ſpirits overwhelm'd, their whole Souls covered with thick darkneſs, and their Bones broken, whilſt others are at eaſe, and ſee the light of his Countenance, and have an unchanged Health. Some travel with weary ſteps, and make their pilgrimage with their own ſorrows to be a vale of tears, whilſt others run the way of his Commandments with inlarged hearts. Some Families are filled with Lamentations, and ſome with ſongs of Praiſe: And all this gives us ſtill greater occaſions to magnify his Grace and Love, that we have a moments eaſe; that we can obſerve one Sabbath, or make one Prayer with hope, deſerves our higheſt thanks and admiration.

Secondly, Do not preſume for all this; for tho' he is not angry yet with you, he may be ſo. This was the fault of *David*, Pſal. 30. 6. *In my proſperity, I ſaid, I ſhall never be moved*; but it immediately follows, verſ. 7. *Thou didſt hide thy*

thy face, and I was troubled. The Sun ſhines now upon you, the Candle of the Lord does refreſh your Tabernacle; but you may meet with many Storms, and Clouds, and Darkneſs, before you come to your journies end. The Diſciples were once greatly pleaſed with the glory of the Transfiguration; and during the delightful interview between Chriſt, and *Moſes*, and *Elias*, they thought themſelves as in Heaven; but a cloud came and obſcured the preceding glory, and then the poor Men were afraid. 'Tis true, the Anger of God endureth but a moment; but even that moment is very ſad, and terrible beyond expreſſion. Weeping endures but for a night; but it may be a very bitter and a doleful night for all that. It is a night like that of the *Egyptians*, when they aroſe, they ſaw all their firſt-born ſlain, and there was an hideous univerſal cry and mourning throughout all the Land: So this night of the Anger of the Lord may deſtroy all our Comforts, and make the firſt-born of our ſtrength, the confidence and the pleaſure of our hopes, to give up the Ghoſt. Pſal. 77. 2, 3, 4. *My Sore ran in the night, and ceaſed not; my ſoul refuſed to be comforted. I complained, and my ſpirit was overwhelm'd. Thou holdeſt mine eyes waking. I am ſo troubled that I cannot ſpeak.* Tho you are at eaſe to day, and feel no trouble, no diſquiet, Are you ſure that it ſhall be ſo to morrow? Are you ſure that you ſhall never ſee any frowns in the face of God? Preſume not upon the ſtrength of your grace, nor the brightneſs of your evidence for Salvation; for that may

languiſh, and this may be obſcured; and thoſe of you that now think your ſelves at the door of Heaven, may be brought, for ought you know, to the contrary, to the very Gates of Hell. Tho' God is pleaſed at the preſent to deal gently with you, yet your ſins may cauſe him to ſend his dreadful rebukes upon you; your Souls lye open and naked to him, *Heb.* 4. 13. and he can make what impreſſions either of his goodneſs or his ſeverity he pleaſes there. Be not ſecure; for *it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.* Who can ſtand when he is angry? Who can bear his blows? or what hand can ſtrike ſo hard a ſtroak as his? There are theſe things in the ſenſe of his Anger, that may prevent your ſecurity; and I will tell you not only what I have ſeen and heard, but what I have experienced and felt in my own Soul.

1. If you have once a ſerious and a fixed apprehenſion of the diſpleaſure of God, no creature can yield you the leaſt comfort; if you be never ſo rich, all your Gold cannot purchaſe one hours Peace and Joy. You may complain indeed to your Friends, and you cannot but complain; but alas! they can give you no relief: Their Language is, *Unleſs the Lord help, we cannot help.* You may go to your Miniſters, they may ſpeak kindly to you, but they cannot make their own words to take effect. If the Heavens above you be as Braſs, they cannot give you Rain, nor make the Dew of God to fall upon your Branches as it uſed to do; they

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can mourn with you, but they cannot wipe your tears away. If you once apprehend that God is angry with you, in vain shall you seek for rest in pleasures, or diversions, or change of Company; for such a stinging thought as this will always pierce you to the quick. *God is mine enemy, and what will these avail?* The sense of his Anger will put even your natural spirits into a strange unquiet agitation, and after this you will not find your very bodies at ease, as they used to be. Psal. 38. 2. *Thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore; there is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger, neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint, then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions*, Job 7. 13, 14. All the Fountains on Earth will never quench your thirst, if the Fountain of Living Waters be shut up. Your Bed will not then be a place of rest, nor your Meat delightful to your taste; your sorrows will keep you waking all the night, and your fears will haunt and pursue you in the day. *My sighing cometh before I eat; and my roarings are poured out like Waters*, Job 3. 24. Your Soul will then abhor all dainty Meat, and your Life will draw nigh unto the Grave; and when you have tired your selves in seeking rest among the creatures, and have found none, you must then sit down, and say by a sad experience, Miserable Comforters are you all; for tho' you run to never so many crowds of quiet people, you can meet with no quietness; as the wounded Hart, tho she run

into the common herd, yet by that means does not loſe her pain, but carries her wound with her where ever ſhe goes.

2. Whileſt you are under the ſenſe of God's diſpleaſnre, you will find no comfort in his Ordinances; every part of his bleſſed Word, will be as a Sword cutting to your very Soul: You will find every Threat to be as a dart thrown at you; and ſee every promiſe that is full of Conſolation to others, yet to be as dry to you: That Scripture which was once your delight, will fill you with Gall and Wormwood: That which you once reckoned to be the book of Life, will then ſeem to be the book of Death; and you will be afraid to read there, for fear of reading your own Condemnation: So great a change does the ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure make: Thoſe Aſſemblies that were once your joy, will then be terrible to you. I go not (ſays the troubled Soul) there to meet a friend as I uſed to do, but to ſee an Enemy: To ſee others joyfully ſerving God and ſinging of his Praiſe, whilſt I am ſilent with deep Affliction, and can only Mourn whileſt they Rejoyce. What pleaſure is it to ſee others feaſting at his Table, whilſt my Sins have deſtroyed my appetite, and there is not one crumb of the bread of Life that belongs to me? I *pray*, and he *ſhuts out my cry*, regards not my entreaties, does not eaſe my diſtreſs, nor ſeems to relent with all my Groans. I have Sinned againſt him, and I dare not ſay, My God, and my Father, any more: I have loſt all my Fervor, and all my Confidence, and all my hope in Prayer.

Prayer. I go round the ſtreets to ſeek him that was once my beloved: Help me all ye Servants of the Lord to find my God again; but for my former undervaluing of his Preſence, he is now departed, and I find him not. Woe! Woe is me! what have I done? Woe is me, that I have loſt him, whom to loſe is Hell.

3. All this will be attended with great anguiſh of Spirit, and with great Tribulation. *Job* 16. 12, 13, *I was at eaſe, but he hath broken me aſunder: he hath alſo taken me by my neck, and ſhaken me to pieces, and ſet me up for his mark*, &c. Then all our Sins are brought freſh into our minds, with a new and a cutting remembrance, as if they had all been committed but as Yeſterday: They rank themſelves in order; every one of them being ſet before us, give us a new ſtab and a wound, to encreaſe the ſore and the pain of our former wounds: They preſent themſelves with all their hideous Aggravations, againſt what Mercy, what Goodneſs, what checks of Conſcience, and what Warnings, and what motions of the Bleſſed Spirit they were committed: And who can bear ſo terrible a ſight as this? *Job* 13. 26. *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me; and makeſt me to poſſeſs the iniquities of my youth. i.e.* 1. Always to think upon them. 2. To feel pain and ſmart in that Remembrance. 3. To be aſtoniſht with my guilt and fears. Then all our thoughts of God himſelf are uneaſy: We can think of nothing but his Greatneſs, his Majeſty, his Juſtice and Holineſs. How does it overwhelm us to think what

what a powerful God we have againſt us. It troubles us to think that he is diſpleaſed, and yet we know that he is juſtly ſo. If God were for me, ſays the *troubled ſoul*, I would bear any pains, and wait, and hope; but He who only can help me, is gone away. He who alone could ſpeak peace, ſeems to take no notice of the ſadneſs of my caſe: My Sins have taken my God away, and what have I more? And when we are ſet on fire with the ſenſe of his Wrath, the more we think, the more we are diſtreſſed; every thought returns with ſad tidings, and pours oyl into the flame. And what that anguiſh is which we feel when we continually think of a diſpleaſed God; There is nothing on Earth that does reſemble, neither are any words capable of expreſſing it. We do then ſmell the Fire and Brimſtone of the Infernal pit; then a man may ſay with *David*, *The ſorrows of death compaſs me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me*: *Pſal.* 116. 3. And I think that theſe Spiritual terrours are of the ſame kind with thoſe which they feel who are now in Hell; only they differ in the degree and in the duration. For a Sinner under the ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure and, in terror for his Sin, is, as if he were in a burning Oven, or in ſcalding Oyl; he is every way beſet, and every way tormented. Trouble of Conſcience indeed is a ſlighter thing; but the ſenſe of wrath kindled there, is vaſtly terrible; 'tis the ſuburbs of deſtruction, 'tis the noiſom ſmell of the bottomleſs Pit. *Job* 6. 4. *The Arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poiſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit.* The Terrors of God do

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ſet themſelves againſt me; whatſoever he thought of, which way ſoever he turned himſelf, he ſaw nothing but what filled him with amazement. *Pſ.* 88. 16. *Thy fierce wrath goeth over me: thy terrors have cut me off.*

4. *That which theſe troubled Souls are afflicted with, is the fear they have that this diſpleaſure will be Eternal: this is implied in that,* Is his mercy clean gone, will he be favourable no more? Pſ. 77. 7. So the Church Lam. 3. 18. *My ſtrength and my hope is periſht from the Lord.* So Pſal. 88. 5. *I am free among the dead, like the ſlain that lie in the Grave, whom thou remembreſt no more,* And that ſickneſs is grievous to us when we have no hope of being better: That wrath is not to be born, which we think to be forerunner of eternal wrath; and thus does the troubled ſoul argue: God has withdrawn himſelf, and it may be will never return again; I have loſt him for the preſent; and Oh! What will become of me, ſhould I loſe ſuch a God for ever? I have now no beams of light, and what if I go hence into outer darkneſs? What if my lot and portion ſhould fall among thoſe that are abhorred of the Lord? Have I once taſted how good he was? and muſt I loſe henceforth all the pleaſant ſenſe of his Mercy? Muſt not Chriſt be my Saviour, nor Heaven my home after all this? Oh! what ſhall I do! where ſhall I appear, ſhould he ſay at laſt, Depart from me, for I know thee not? Shall I be placed at the left hand of Chriſt? ſhall I after all that I have read and heard, after all my profeſſion, ſtrivings, and my prayers, be

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ſhut out of that Kingdom, when others ſhall enter in? How ſhall I bear ſo great a diſappointment? How ſhall I dwell with everlaſting burnings?

III. If you have not yet been under the apprehenſion of Gods diſpleaſure, take warning by thoſe that are ſo; dare not to venture upon any ſin, when you behold their grief and their ſorrows for their Iniquities. You ſee their tears; you hear their lamentable groans; you ſee that nothing in this world is refreſhing or comfortable to them: and will you hug the Serpent that has ſtung them, and made them to cry out in the *bitterneſs of their Souls*? Oh ſtop where you are, go no further, leſt you fall into the depths, leſt the Fire that ſcorches them, begin to ſeize on you, leſt the God whom they account their Enemy, begin alſo to frown on you; learn obedience by their Strokes, leſt you alſo be made to feel the ſmarting Rod. You ſee how thoſe that once were as chearful, as pleaſant, and as little afraid as you, are now caſt down, and troubled, and perplexed, and cannot be merry as they uſed to be: The ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure has untuned their Harps, that they cannot ſing the Songs of *Zion*. You ſee how their Pleaſure and their Hope is ſhipwrackt; beware leſt you run upon the ſame Rock; for the doing ſo, after the ſight of their example, will make you to be guilty of a double Crime; firſt of doing ill, and then in doing it after ſuch a warning as their ſorrows gave you. *Job* ſays he was *ſet up as a mark*, ch. 7. 20. And ſo are others in the like caſe:

caſe: They now receive the ſhots of that Juſtice which they have provoked; but if their puniſhment do not make us to humble our ſelves, and to repent, we may be ſet in their place, and it will render the Wounds we ſhall then receive, more poiſonous and malignant, for not having taken and improved the warning that was given us by them before. Be you drawn by his Goodneſs and his gentle Methods, that you may never know what his ſevere diſpleaſure is: For God has further ends in long and terrible afflictions, than the Correction, or the Good of the Perſon ſo afflicted: They are a part of his Government of the World, and he has a regard to the Welfare of the Publick, in that which ſeems to relate only to us. *Deut.* 17. 13. *All the people ſhall hear and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly.*

IV. Beware of provoking God; dread the beginnings of his Wrath; *if his wrath be kindled but a little, bleſſed are all they that truſt in him*, Pſal. 2. 12. *Whoſo provoketh him to anger, ſinneth againſt his own ſoul*, Prov. 20. 2. And in ſuch a caſe, the evil ſpirits have a power given them to moleſt and trouble us with their impure ſuggeſtions, and with ſtrange and unaccountable fears, Pſal. 78. 49. *He caſt upon them the fierceneſs of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by ſending evil angels among them.* And in that unhappy moment, when our ſin has ſtirred up his Wrath, there is nothing in Heaven or in Earth but what will range it ſelf on the part of God againſt us; and the Devil himſelf will then take the

the ſame part, not out of Love to God, but out of Revenge to us, to execute the Deſigns of his Juſtice; and all the world will be ſo far from yielding us the leaſt ſhelter from his Wrath, that it trembles at it. Pſal. 18. 13, 14, 15. Pſ. 104. 32. *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they ſmoke: all the proud helpers ſtoop under him.* What Miniſter can ſpeak Peace to ſuch a Soul, when the God of Peace will not? His Ambaſſadors cannot go upon a reviving Meſſage, unleſs they be charged with it by their Lord and Maſter: If he make the Heavens to be as Braſs, all the Fountains of Waters will be dried up: The *ſpirit of a man will* indeed *bear his infirmities*, i. e. his bodily weakneſs and his pain, for a little while; but if he be followed with Breach upon Breach, and more heavy Croſſes preſs upon the former lighter Evils, then his Spirit and his Courage will begin to fail; but no briskneſs of Temper, no ſtrength of Nature, no livelineſs of Spirits can ſtand before one ſpark of the Wrath of God; they cannot ſhut their eyes that they ſhould not ſee it; they cannot ſleep, that they may forget it; they cannot loſe the ſting that afflicts them, with all the diverſions and the pleaſures in the world; the ſenſe of Guilt will haunt and purſue them where-ever they go.

V. Strive to be ſafe from the Eternal wrath of God; from that wrath which will not be for a moment, but for ever. If his wrath here make his Servants a Terror to themſelves and to others, what terror will the damned have, when

when they are compaſt about with pure and unmingled wrath, that is more hot and ſcorching than all the Eruptions of it here on Earth? Whilſt you ſee but a ſmall Cloud, the leaſt intimations of his Diſpleaſure, ſeek to make your peace with God, through Jeſus Chriſt, leſt on a ſudden, Ruin and Deſolation fall upon your heads; leſt if you ſtay a little longer, you have no time, no ſpace wherein to repent. Oh how can you fold your arms, and be at eaſe, if the Great God of all the world be your Enemy! and you know not but the next day, the next hour, or the next minute, his Arrows may be ſhot againſt you. Job 36. 18. *Becauſe there is wrath, beware leſt he take thee away with his ſtroke; then a great ranſome cannot deliver thee.* The withdrawing of the Favour and the Love of God, the leaſt Eclipſes of his ſhining Light, are very terrible; but Oh how much more dreadful would it be, ſhould you fall into the terrors of an Eternal Night! You can no way eſcape his Juſtice, *Pſal.* 139. 8. Betake your ſelves to God, whilſt he is treating with you for your good; and tho his Juſtice fright you for your guilt, yet upon your humble Submiſſions, his Mercy will relieve you. It is he alone through Chriſt, with whom you have chiefly to do. His Anger will purſue you whereever you go, unleſs you meet him with humble and repenting Tears, and plead the Blood of Jeſus; and this will quench that Fire that has already begun to flame; your Salvation is concerned, your ſouls are in danger, therefore make the moſt earneſt applications to God, that he may be merciful

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to you, ere it be too late. If I could tell you, that there is a perſon that deſigns to fire the Houſe in which you live, and gave you clear information of the Time, I need not after this perſuade you to be watchful; the love that you have to your own ſafety, would oblige you to prevent his purpoſe. This is what I cannot acquaint you with; but I can tell you of that which is more formidable; The Devil is laying a Train to deſtroy your Peace, your Comfort, and your Hope: Seek you to countermine his malicious Deſign, leſt he betray you to danger, whilſt you think there is none at all.

VI. Speak kindly and compaſſionately to thoſe whom you perceive to be under the ſenſe of God's Anger. *Job* complains, *ch.* 19. 2. *How long will ye vex my ſoul, and break me in pieces?* And as men that have been long uſed to pore upon their troubles, he tells them how often they had vext him, *v.* 3. *Theſe ten times have ye reproached me; ye are not aſhamed that ye make your ſelves ſtrange to me.* 'Tis very likely they did not deſignedly vex him with their words; for being good men, they could not be ſo extremely barbarous; they made good Sermons, but a very ſorry and miſtaken Application. It is eaſie to trample upon thoſe with ſharp and cutting Speeches, whom God and their Sorrows have already thrown into the mire: It is eaſie for thoſe that are in no trouble, to ſilence and upbraid thoſe that are: As *Job* ſays to *Eliphaz*, *Shall vain words have an end? I alſo could ſpeak as you do, if your ſoul were in my ſouls ſtead; I could heap*

heap up words againſt you, and ſhake mine head at you. But I would ſtrengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my Lips ſhould aſſwage your grief. When any of your Friends are under ſpiritual trouble, you muſt carefully abſtain from any paſſionate or ſowre word or action that may increaſe their grief; it will be ſome ſmall help to them to ſee that you pity them, tho' you cannot give them relief. Uſe all the compaſſionate and the kind words to them that you can, and ſeek to bind up their ſores with a gentle hand; beware of uſing the leaſt ſavour of ſharpneſs and reproach and ſcorn, for theſe will, as they did to *Job*, vex their Souls more, and they will be evil in you, as well as unpleaſant to them. Hence is that complaint, *Reproach hath broken my heart, and I am full of heavineſs; and I looked for ſome to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none: they gave me alſo gall for my meat, and in my thirſt they gave me vinegar to drink*, Pſal. 69. 20. *Our ſoul is exceedingly filled with the ſcorning of thoſe that are at eaſe, and with the contempt of the proud*, Pſ. 123. 4. But above all, abhor the thought of the leaſt inward delight from their miſeries. Obad. 12. *Thou ſhouldeſt not have looked on the day of thy brother, in the day that he became a ſtranger; neither ſhould'ſt thou have rejoyced over the children of Judah in the day of their deſtruction; neither ſhouldſt thou have ſpoken proudly in the day of diſtreſs.* Job 19. 28. *Ye ſhould ſay, why perſecute we him, ſeeing the root of the matter is in him?* Roughneſs and ſeverity is not the way to help ſuch as are troubled and caſt down; and he had need be learn

ed that ſpeaks a word in ſeaſon to the weary, *Iſa.* 50. 4. The rarity of ſuch a one is expreſſed, *Job* 33. 23. *If there be an Interpreter, one among a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs.* Thoſe that under the Characters of Ambaſſadors of the Goſpel of Peace, do nothing but thunder out the Law to a wounded and a troubled Soul, ſhew they are unlike to the Jeſus whom they would ſeem to repreſent; and they ſhew that they have in ſuch matters very little skill, and no experience at all; neither do ſuch do as they would be done by in the like caſe. There is a ſort of balſome in compaſſionate and gentle words; tho' they do not fully perform a Cure upon our wounds, yet they make the pain and the ſmart leſs; whereas a rough and ſour carriage does exaſperate and heighten them, and is but the pouring of oyl into the flame.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Shewing what is to be done by thoſe that think God is angry with them. And firſt of Prayer, as a principal help againſt their trouble. And ſome Objections of tempted perſons anſwered.

I Am now to make application to thoſe who are under an apprehenſion of God's Anger: There are no people in the World whoſe caſe does require a greater pity; and to whoſe relief we ſhould be more forward to contribute all that we are able. While we are at liberty, their poor Souls are under the bondage of an overwhelming fear. That God whom we ſerve with hope, is terrible to them; in thoſe Ordinances, and that Sabbath which yield ſweetneſs and refreſhment to us, they find no delight, becauſe the Comforter that ſhould uphold their Souls, is departed from them; if on a journey we ſaw any perſon wounded, and mourning under his bleeding wounds, and crying out for help, the compaſſion that is fixed in humane Nature would move us to aſſiſt him, and not to paſs by and ſuffer him to groan under the ſmart of ſo deplorable a condition; and much more ſhould we be ready to help our fellow-creatures in a Caſe that is far more ſad and dreadful, ſuch as is this now before us. There are a great many at this very time, who are complaining that they have no hope, no

proſpect of deliverance from their preſent miſeries and afflictions; that tell us, They are caſt off by God; that he has forſaken them; that their Sins are ſet in order before them; and that they are afraid the God, whom they once thought their own God, will be favourable no more. Oh! how little do we know what we do, when we ſin? It is eaſie for a moment, it yields us a little upercial tranſient delight; but it leaves a woful ſting, and a laſting bitterneſs behind. Oh! what would ſuch poor creatures give, that they had never ſinned? or that they had never ſinned ſo wilfully, ſo frequently againſt that God whom they once experienced to be very good and gracious, but whom they now find to be very ſevere, and very terrible? They cannot look below, but they think that Hell is opening its mouth to ſwallow them up; they cannot look above, but they ſee the great Creator of Heaven and Earth to be as an Enemy to them; And who can ſtand before thoughts ſo cutting and overwhelming as theſe are? Now this being a condition which I was in my ſelf not long ago, and from which the Mighty Grace of God has been pleaſed to ſave me; I deſire to give all the help I can to ſuch dejected and trembling Souls; and none among us, but perhaps may at one time or other fall into ſuch depths as theſe; therefore I hope the following directions may be of ſome uſe or other: I beg of you that are at eaſe now, to regard theſe things; for if you fall ſo low, the anguiſh and bitterneſs of your ſpirits will not allow you to give ſuch a diſtinct and careful attention to what

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ſhall be ſpoken to you then, as you now may.

Firſt, If you are under the ſenſe of God's Anger for your ſin, *pray earneſtly to him*, to turn his Wrath away: We uſually deprecate War and Famine, and the Plague, and thoſe other miſchiefs which by the evils they bring upon our bodies are very formidable to us; but this ſenſe of the Divine Diſpleaſure has ſomething in it that is more formidable, for it brings an unſpeakable load of trouble on the Soul, and wounds that part of our ſelves which is capable of having either a very pure and noble joy, or a very piercing grief and ſadneſs: A man that is ſunk under a burthen that is too heavy for him to bear, cannot but groan to be at eaſe. Thus Pſal. 6. 1, 2, 3. *O Lord rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure; have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak; O Lord heal me, for my bones are vexed. My ſoul is alſo ſore vexed; but thou, O Lord, how long? Return, O Lord, deliver my ſoul: O ſave me for thy mercies ſake.* Theſe are the breathings of one ſenſible of a great and a violent diſtreſs; and tell us, that even our weakneſs, and our helpleſs condition, is an argument that we may plead with God: As here, *Have mercy upon me, for I am weak*, q. d. Thy Goodneſs, thy Glory, and Power, will be rendred more illuſtrious, in giving ſome relief to one ſo deſolate, and ſo low as I am. But I know what poor trembling Souls will be ready to reply, and

Object 1. Alas, I cannot pray; the Spirit that ſhould warm my Soul, and kindle my Deſires, does not move upon me as he uſed to do: I grieved and vexed him heretofore, and now he has left me to grieve and to vex alone. I am ſo troubled, that I know not what to ſpeak; and when I endeavour to do it, I find no Fervour, no Life at all; my Prayers are grown very troubleſome and uneaſie to me.

Anſw. I grant you, this is a caſe ſad enough; it is ſad for creatures ſo miſerable, and ſo full of wants as we are, not to be able to pour out our Supplications before the Lord; and it is more ſad, when our ſins have made the Spirit, that only can teach us how to pray, to retire: but there are ſome Conſiderations that may ſupport us even in ſo ſad a caſe as this. 1. Our Diſtreſs teaches us the Folly of our Sin, and cauſes us to hate that which has coſt us ſo very dear; and it is well for us that we ſee the odiouſneſs of it, tho it be ſmart and pain that opens our eyes: 'Tis better to be wounded in order to a cure, than to dye at eaſe, and ſo to periſh for evermore. 2. The Spirit is not ſo withdrawn, but that he will return, upon our earneſt addreſſes for his Grace: He hovers ſtill about us; and tho we did ill to ſhut him out before, yet this bleſſed Gueſt does but wait for a favourable opportunity to do us good again: He is not quite gone; that ſenſe which we have of Sin, is his own work. 3. Our indiſpoſition to the Duty of Prayer, is no ſign that we are void of Life: A bed-rid Perſon lives, as well as one that is

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in his firm and pleaſant Health; a groan is a ſign of Life, as well as laughter, and a merry Song: It is very undeſirable indeed, to have ſuch a feeble and decaying life; but the way to make it more ſtrong, is to keep our Souls in exerciſe; and the weak and creeping motion wherewith we ſtirred at firſt, being continued, will enable us to tread with a more ſteady foot, and we ſhall get ſeveral Paces further in a very little while. By praying, tho it be in a very poor manner, we ſhall learn to pray: Tho we do but ſigh after God, yet even a ſigh may a little eaſe us; and by frequent uſe, be turned into a loud and prevailing Cry. God is ſtill your Creator; and he that hears the Ravens and the young Lions when they roar for meat, will not be deaf to you. 4. 'Tis a more excellent ſtate of Soul, to pray to God, and to perſevere in it, when you have no Comfort, than when you have. Senſible Conſolation is a very deſirable thing: 'Tis as the Dew of Heaven; as Manna coming thence; like Honey or the Honey-Comb, very pleaſant to the taſte: But a Dependance and Truſt in God, when he is a withdrawing-God, is one of the moſt glorious Acts of Faith; and if it be not treated with Feaſts and ſplendid Entertainments here, I can aſſure you, nay God himſelf has aſſur'd you, That it ſhall fare very well in the next world: Senſible Conſolation may be in the inferior nature, as the *Myſtical People* call it, it may be occaſioned by the Temper of the Body, by the Harmony of the Paſſions, or the agreeable Diſpoſitions of the Natural Spirits; but thoſe

other leſs pleaſant acts, are ſeated in the higheſt Region of the Soul, in the Underſtanding and the Will, and upon that account are more truly Spiritual, and more abiding. 5. Thoſe poor troubled people that complain of their deadneſs and incapacity to manage the Duty of Prayer, ought to conſider what an influence their fears have had upon their bodies; fear does naturally contract and dull the heart; the motions of it are weak and languid; deſpairing thoughts and apprehenſions about our Everlaſting State, dry up our moiſture, and by cutting off our hopes, make every thing that was pleaſant to us, to wither away; and 'tis a very hard matter for the Soul to retain its heat and warmth, when its dear Companion the body does not aſſiſt it as it uſed to do; when the Spirits with which it ſerves it ſelf in ſo many ſeveral actions, are ſtagnated into a feeble, and almoſt undiſcerned motion. Some great Saints there have been, who by a ſort of Holy *Anteperiſtaſis*, have glowed in their hearts with a quicker Flame to God, when all has been cold and ſtorm round about them: Some there have been, who have never had more inward Health, than when their outward man decayed; and whoſe ſouls ſeem'd manifeſtly to thrive, when their bodies were mouldring away; but, generally ſpeaking, the Neighbourhood, or the nearneſs of a ſickly body, proves a great clog and hindrance to the mind; and there is no queſtion, but God will make allowances for our weakneſs; and the groaning after him by one under the power of a Diſeaſe, may be as grateful to him, as a long continued Prayer by one

one in Health: Pray therefore to God, tho it be with heavineſs, tho it be mingled with many a bitter ſigh, yet it will be a payment of that homage which you owe to God; and you know not how ſoon you may meet with a gracious return. You may kneel down in ſorrow, and he may lift you up with Joy, and ſay, *Be of good comfort, thy ſins are forgiven thee:* And I know that would be very welcome and pleaſant news to you; the news of a Kingdom to be your own, would not be half ſo refreſhing.

Obj. 2. It is not for me to pray; I am Sinner enough already, God knows; and would you have me aggravate my Guilt? for I have wandring Thoughts, and an unbelieving heart: I am a wicked perſon, and the *prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 28. 9. And therefore to what purpoſe ſhould I pray? If any man indeed break with contempt the Laws of God, and then think to make ſatisfaction by his Prayers, and an outward or a pompous Devotion, he offers an affront to the All-knowing God; and his holy Eye cannot look upon an Action ſo criminal, without the greateſt diſdain and ſcorn. If a man will Swear, and Curſe, and Damn himſelf with one breath, and then deſire God to bleſs him with the next; this would be a ridiculous Pretence to Religion; and ſuch are like to find ſevere Puniſhment from that God, whom they abuſe with ſo ſhameleſs a Confidence, and of whom they ſpeak with ſo little Reverence. If a man ſhould deſire of God to help him to rob, to plunder, or to wrong

wrong his Neighbours, this were, as far as he could, to make the Holy One of *Iſrael* a partner in his Crimes. If a man ſhould kill another unjuſtly, and glut himſelf with Revenge, and then, as ſome have expreſt it, ſay Grace over his bloody Banquet, this were to commit a double Wickedneſs. It was an abominable thing when ſo many harmleſs Proteſtants were ſo barbarouſly Butcher'd in *France*, to ſing *Te Deum* at *Rome*, for the Maſſacring ſo many poor Creatures; as if the God of Mercy had been Cruel as well as they; as if the Rage that came from Hell, had deſcended from the God of Love: As if a man that lives at the Prince's Charge, and is maintained at his Table, ſhould break the moſt Venerable Laws of his Kingdom, and then thank the Prince for giving him a power to do that which he knows he deteſts and hates. There is no queſtion, but it is the Duty of a wicked man to pray to God. I ſuppoſe there is none thinks *Simon Magus* a very good man, and yet he was exhorted, even when he was in *the gall of bitterneſs, and the bond of iniquity*, to pray, *if perhaps the thoughts of his heart might be forgiven him*, Acts 8. 22. If you think your ſelves wicked, there is nothing more your Duty, than to beg the Grace of God; to ſtrive, to knock, to call upon him whilſt he may be found; but beware that you do not think that ſome failings even in ſome conſiderable Duties, are a ſign of your total Apoſtacy: Unbelief is in the beſt, but not indeed in its reigning Power: Strive as much as you can, and then bewail your weakneſs, and implore the help of God, and he will be favourable to you.

Obj. 2.

Obj. 3. 'Tis true, I know 'tis my Duty to pray; and I have prayed for ſeveral Months, and for ſeveral Years, and I have ſtill the ſame Diſeaſes, and the ſame Fears that I ever had. I have no leſs pain in my Body, no leſs diſquietneſs in my Soul, than I had the firſt moment that I began to pray: *He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out; he hath made my chain heavy; alſo when I cry, and ſhout, he ſhutteth out my prayer.* Lam. 3. 8. I am juſt like *Saul*, when he enquired of the Lord, 1 *Sam.* 28. 6. *The Lord anſwered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by Prophets.* He would have no Communication with him, take no notice of what he did: Even in ſuch a caſe am I: I enquire after him in his Ordinances, but have no news of his Gracious Preſence there: In Tears I pour out my Soul day and night, and pray; but my Prayers that I ſend up to Heaven, bring to my poor weary Soul no tidings of Comfort, or of Peace, back again: mine eyes fail with looking up, my heart faints, and I can hold out no longer in a Duty wherein I find no delight, and which brings me no advantage; why ſhould I wait upon the Lord any longer?

Anſw. This I think to be one of the greateſt Temptations wherewith Satan does aſſault troubled Souls: He knows well, that if they once quit their hold of God, they fall into his hands, they lengthen out his Chain, and whet his Malice, and come within his reach: And there is no Duty which the Devil hates more than Pray-

er;

er; for it has many a time defeated his Deſigns, and made his Kingdom ſhake: Therefore I earneſtly deſire you, as you love your Souls, as you would not diſhonour God, nor gratify the Devil, that you would never give it over; tho you do but chatter like a Crane, yet 'tis better than to be altogether ſilent; tho you do but mourn after God, 'tis better than to reſolve to let him go: Tho you can but ſay, *Lord be merciful to me a ſinner:* Tho you can but ſmite upon your breaſt, and look up to Heaven, tho you can but creep in his ways, 'tis better than to leave them; tho you can but ſpeak a word or two in Prayer, 'tis much better than not to pray at all. Oh what a terrible thing is it to leave calling upon God, to give our ſelves for loſt, to ſay it is vain, when nothing is too hard to do for Almighty Power, and for Infinite Goodneſs; and woe unto us when we quit the Rock of Ages, and commit our ſelves unto the Waves; what ſorrows do we then meet withal, and how low do we ſink? How intolerable is it to have the rebukes of our Conſcience, the upbraidings of Satan, the guilt of Sin, the fear of Hell, and to have no God to whom we can go with hope; do not ſuffer the greatneſs of your Evils to deprive you of that ſupport which is to be found in the performance of this Duty; tho you have not a preſent anſwer to what you deſire, yet it no way follows, that your Prayers are not heard: God knows better than you, what will be the moſt proper ſeaſon in which to beſtow the Mercy that you think to be moſt neceſſary: His delays in this kind are no ſign of his abhorrence; He may

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ſuffer us to fall into very great Agonies, that ſo like our Lord in the Garden, we may pray more earneſtly; and our Requeſts are not vain, tho we have no dawnings of a near and immediate deliverance. The Prayers of the Primitive Church for Kings and all in Authority, were anſwered many years afterwards, when *Conſtantine* was converted to the Faith: Beware of fainting under the hand of God; and yet when we can look upon him only as an Enemy, 'tis almoſt impoſſible not to faint: Under ſmart and ſore troubles, we muſt frequently look up to God, and beg his ſtrength; and ſeeing in ſuch a caſe we cannot perform any long or very regular duties, we muſt often renew, tho it be the very ſame deſires, *Pſal.* 142. 4, 5. *Eph.* 6. 18. And to this purpoſe conſider,

1. There is none beſides God himſelf, can help you; and this ſhould cauſe you to perſevere in Prayer: His hand alone can heal the Wounds; 'Tis common for the troubled Soul to ſay, Oh what would I give for one Beam of Hope! I would give all the world, if I had it, for one pleaſant Sight of the Face of God: It is not ſo to be obtained, not by bare wiſhes, nor by the purchaſe of any thing that is ſo low and contemptible as is all that which is in the world: When the Heavens are braſs, none can cauſe the Rain to fall; when the Sun is ſet, not all the artificial Fires which the skill of man can make, will yield ſo large and ſo pleaſant a light unto this Earth as he did; his return chaſes the darkneſs, and brings to us the welcome day. In a diſtruſt of your own weakneſs, have recourſe

courſe to this God, and ſay with *David*, Pſal. 51. 12, 17. It muſt be the Act of a Power that is Omnipotent, to give you comfort; not all the Angels in Heaven, nor all the men on earth, can help you, unleſs he be pleaſed to do it. As you contribute nothing to your firſt Regeneration; as the thing created does nothing to bring it ſelf into Being, only receives from the Creator's Power and Goodneſs what he is pleaſed to give; expect not overmuch from the moſt knowing Miniſters, or from your deareſt friends, they are but Ciſterns, which can yield no water to quench your thirſt, unleſs they be filled with Water by the Clouds of Heaven: As to the ſatisfaction and the quiet of a Troubled ſoul, *all men are vanity*; and it is an uncommunicable Prerogative of the Divine Nature, certainly and infallibly to relieve the miſerable, *Iſa.* 57. 19. Other friends either know not your wants, or by their own Poverty, or their diſtance, are not in a capacity to ſupply them: But God is always near, always full of Goodneſs, and is acquainted with whatſoever we need or do expect: If all the world were your Friends, and he your Enemy, the Gaiety of their Looks, the Pleaſure of their Smiles, would not take away the Terror of his Frowns; the threatning Cloud would hang over your heads, and fright you with its dreadful Preſages, whereever you went; and on the contrary, if all the people in the world were your Enemies, and he your Friend, his Love would ſweeten all their Hatred; his Voice would ſtill all their Clamours; his Arm would fence off all their Blows; and under the Wings

Wings of his Providence you might lye down and ſleep in peace: He can ſave you when you have deſtroyed your ſelves; when you have run to the very door and the gates of Hell, he can pull you back: When you are even dying, he can ſtrengthen and revive you: 'Tis with him that you have principally to do; to him muſt you therefore pray, becauſe from him alone can your help come: When *Adam* had committed ſin, he was afraid, and took no pleaſure even in Paradiſe, tho (as one ſays) the Sun ſhined upon his head with as gentle and refreſhing Beams; the Rivers ran as clear as before, the Birds ſung with as Melodious a Voice, the Flowers had as fragrant a ſmell, the Herbs were cloathed with as freſh a Verdure, and all the Fruits flouriſhed as before; but from the poor man Peace and Innocence was fled away; all without was calm, but he found a tempeſt riſing in his own Breaſt, which he knew not how to lay. Thoſe of us that have by woful experience felt the Terrors of the Lord know that all the advices of our Friends, all their Arguings and Diſcourſes, all their Entreaties and their Prayers, gave us no manner of eaſe, till God Himſelf was pleaſed to command Salvation for us. Job 34.29. *When he giveth quietneſs, who can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who can then behold him? whether it be done againſt a nation or a man only?* The greater are our Diſtreſſes, the more fervent ſhould our Prayers be; and when the Winds are higheſt, and the Storms encreaſe, and threaten us with Shipwrack and with Ruine, the nearneſs and the greatneſs of our danger,

danger, muſt cauſe us with more ſpeed to ariſe and call upon our God. Therefore though you have the ſenſe of his diſpleaſure, yet ſay, there is none can help me but God himſelf, there is none can heal my diſeaſes, or forgive my ſins, but he; therefore as long as I live, will I pray, and call upon him till he have Mercy upon me.

Secondly, Tho you are under the ſenſe of God's Anger, you have encouragement to pray, from many Promiſes, and from the Office and the Name of Chriſt: That Mediator that well remembers what he felt, when he groaned under his Father's Wrath, knows alſo with what Flames your Souls are ſcorched: With a moſt compaſſionate eye does he look upon you, and will awake to promote your Safety, if you do but ſay as the poor frighted Diſciples, *Maſter ſave us, or elſe we periſh.* 'Tis true, he is attended with Illuſtrious Spirits, ſome of which were never thus ſick, and others whom he has fully cured; but in the Throng of his Admiring Courtiers, in the midſt of their Chearful and pleaſant Hallelujahs, his Heart is concerned for you, and his Ears will be open to your Cry; his Interceſſion gives you good ground of hope; he ever lives to manage that glorious and honourable Work; and having an unchangeable Prieſthood, *he is able to ſave them to the uttermoſt, that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. To the uttermoſt, is, as one obſerves, (*Dr.* Goodwin, *Triumph of Faith from Chriſt's Interceſſion, p.* 199.) a good word, and put in for our Comfort. For (ſays

(ſays he) let thy ſoul be ſet upon the higheſt mount that ever any creature was yet ſet upon, and that it is inlarged to take in and view the moſt ſpacious Proſpect both of Sin and Miſery, and difficulties of being ſaved, that ever yet any poor humbled ſoul did caſt within it ſelf; yea join to theſe all the objections and hindrances of thy Salvation, that the heart of man can ſuppoſe or invent againſt it ſelf; lift up thy eyes, and look to the utmoſt thou canſt ſee, and Chriſt by his Interceſſion is able to ſave thee beyond the Horizon and furtheſt compaſs of thy Thoughts, even to the utmoſt and the worſt caſe the heart of man can ſuppoſe. Cry often to God, Oh pity me, a poor helpleſs ſinner, for the ſake of Chriſt; he bore thy wrath, turn it away from me, for I am not able to bear it. The Name of Jeſus carries Comfort and Salvation with it: He is a perfect Saviour in every time of need: The Name of Jeſus Chriſt tells you, that his Office is to do good to the miſerable, to heal the diſeaſed, to open the eyes of the blind, *to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the priſon to them that are bound*, Iſa. 61. 1. You are to pray in that name which was celebrated by all the Patriarchs and Holy Men of old, by the Prophets and by the Prieſts under the Law, tho it was then wrapt up in obſcure Types and Repreſentations; that Name in which God himſelf delights; at which the Angels bow with Reverence, and at which the Devils tremble; that Name which is great in Heaven and Earth, in which you were baptized,

and in which you muſt place all your hopes; in this you may implore aſſiſtance in all your wants; and this may furniſh you with an holy confidence; for 'tis the Name of the Son of God, of his entirely Beloved Son; and it would be a Reproach to this Great and Venerable Name, to pray with diſtruſtful thoughts. Oh let this be a ſupport to you, that you may have acceſs to God by this Name, which has been dear to all the Faithful, and muſt be ſo to you; and which has been the refuge of many a poor trembling Soul. This is the Name which the Saints of God have mentioned in all their ſtraits, with great delight; of which they were pleaſed frequently to hear and to ſpeak, and which was the Joy of their Hearts, and for which they refuſed not to ſuffer Death. Some have taken the pains to obſerve, that it is mentioned in the Epiſtles of *Paul*, 220 times, and often in the Goſpel of *John*; ſo ſweet, ſo dear to them was the Name of Jeſus. This is the firſt General way of Relief, that they who are under the ſenſe of God's Anger ought to take, *viz.* To Pray unto him: So Jer. 10. 24. *O Lord, correct me, but with judgment; not in thine anger, leſt thou bring me to nothing.* Pſal. 39. 10. *Remove thy ſtroke away from me, for I am conſumed by the blow of thine hand.* Pſal. 85. 4, 5, 6, 7. Pſal. 38. 21, 22. Pſal. 138. 3. Pſal. 143. 2.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Faith in Chriſt, as another Help under the ſenſe of God's Diſpleaſure: And the ſeveral tendencies it hath to calm an afflicted Soul under long and ſore Tryals.

Second General. When you are under the ſenſe of God's Anger for your Sins, act Faith upon God and Chriſt. Faith, I may well ſay, is the Mother of all the Graces; it conceives and brings them forth, and takes care to promote their growth; it contributes Life to them at the firſt, and cauſes them to thrive and flouriſh afterwards; with this our meaner Services meet with a chearful and a favourable acceptance; and without it, not all the moſt pompous Devotions, not all the moſt tedious and painful Mortifications that we could ever practiſe, would be of any value in the ſight of God. What mighty things has this produc'd? What miraculous Triumphs did it gain? And no Hiſtory can furniſh us with an account of ſo many great and illuſtrious Heroes, of ſo many difficulties, and ſo great Victories, as the XI*th* of the *Hebrews* furniſhes us withal: Not one mentioned there, but met with great Troubles; not one there, but overcame them; and 'tis always expreſſed, *By Faith* they did this or that: To the moſt, Faith does appear to be an eaſie thing,

having not ſeen their ſins in their odiouſneſs and their aggravations; having not much thought of the Holineſs, and Juſtice, and Majeſty of God, and of the Spiritual Law that pierces into all the depths and receſſes of the Soul: They think it a ſmall matter; but to a poor ſinner that is under the Rebukes of God, and of his own Conſcience, that is awakened with terrible Threats, and amazing Fears; that ſees vaſt multitudes of ſins within, and Hell without, there is nothing more difficult: For thus he argues; Can an holy God bear with ſo vile a Sinner: Can he forgive ſo many and ſo great Iniquities? Will he be gracious to one that has been ſo much his Enemy as I have been? Will that Love ever be ſhewed to me, which I have ſo much ſlighted and undervalued, and for my Contempt of which, God knows I now pay very dear? Will the Great Ruler of Heaven and Earth be favourable to a Worm? Will he admit a Rebel to his Preſence and his Glory? It is not eaſie to ſatisfie a mind that is ſtrugling with thoſe manifold Objections which carnal Reaſon, and Senſe, and a man's own heart ſet themſelves againſt with ſo much ſeeming ſtrength and force. But now there are ſeveral ways by which this ſo much oppoſed Faith does prevail, and obtain a Conqueſt over ſo ſubtle and plauſible Enemies as theſe are.

1. Faith quiets the Soul, by directing it to conſider the Nature, the Promiſe, and the Word of God; it takes away the ſowreneſs of our Thoughts, whereby we are apt to conclude that God

God is of a furious and implacable Nature; that he will never be reconciled, or have to do with Creatures so mean and so sinful as we are. This discovers to us the Terms of his Covenant, the free Offers of his Mercy, *Isa.* 27. 4, 5. *Fury is not in me; who would set the thorns and bryars against me in battel? I would go through them, I would burn them together. Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me.* His Strength, *i.e.* the Holy Properties of his Nature, his Goodness, his Unchangeableness, his Faithfulness, which he has graciously revealed with a design thereby to support our Hearts. Faith guides us to the view of his Promises, to the Truth and Authority of the Promiser, to his All-sufficiency, and his readiness to Pardon and to Save: And this indeed is hardly to be entertained: To think that when we are under the apprehensions of his Wrath, that he is ready to forgive: For if I may judg of others by my self, 'tis not so much his Power that we then question, as his Goodness; not so much, whether he *can*, for that we know well enough, but whether he *will* give us Help: Now Faith leads our trembling Souls to the Promises, which are the voluntary Engagements of God, whereby he has obliged himself to do us good; which are the product of his Love, and which convey a quickning power and virtue to the Soul: it shews us also the foundation on which all these Promises rely, even that Jesus Christ, in whom they are all *Yea and Amen*, i. e. very certain and very true; *and he is the same, yesterday, and to day, and for ever*, Heb. 13. 8. Faith makes us hum-

ble, and conſequently patient; it empties the Soul of all proud and lofty thoughts; it ſees that it it has nothing of its own whereon to truſt, and therefore depends on God alone; it diſcovers his Relations as a Creator, as a Father; and produces acts in the mind ſuitable to theſe comfortable Titles, *Pſal.* 42. 11. *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul? and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.* Suitably to that in Iſa. 50. 10. *Who is among you that walketh in darkneſs, and hath no light? let him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon his God. i. e.* If he be without any reviving ſenſe of the Love of God, any ſight of his own Grace, and I may add, without any hope of Deliverance and Salvation; for the leaſt hope carries with it ſome light, tho it be very feeble, and almoſt undiſcerned: Now for a man to caſt his Anchor in the dark, and to truſt when he hath no viſible foundation for his Faith, is a work of labour and of difficulty. The Name of God in this caſe, is a great relief; and that Name is proclaimed, 24 *Exod.* 4. 5. *The Lord God, merciful, gracious, long-ſuffering, abundant,* &c. So that as Dr. *Goodwin* ſays, *Child of Light*, p. 126. When a poor Soul in diſtreſs is not able to ſay, I ſee ſuch or ſuch ſigns, or any evidence in my ſelf, whereby I can conclude, That God is my God, or Chriſt my Saviour; tho I know nothing by my ſelf whereby I can challenge any preſent Intereſt; yet becauſe *Grace and Mercy* is his Name, and *our Righteouſneſs* his Son's Name, therefore I do caſt my ſelf upon both for Par-

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don and Favour; thereupon my Soul relies, ſtays, and abides, and from theſe it will not be driven. Two things concur to this Truſt; firſt, that there is Free Grace, Good Will, and Mercy in God, and that Jeſus Chriſt is appointed and made to be our Righteouſneſs. And 2*dly*, That I am capable of, and may come to have an Intereſt in both theſe; and that tho there be nothing in me which may challenge an intereſt in them, yet there is nothing that excludes me; whereupon I caſt my ſelf upon God for both, and there reſt.

2. Faith will greatly help us, as it gives us a right underſtanding in the nature of thoſe long and ſevere Afflictions, whereby we are apt to conclude, That God is angry with us; it will ſhew us, that there is nothing in them new or ſtrange; it will carry our minds beyond the preſent ſmart, and ſhew light beyond the darkeſt Cloud; It will teach us to judge of God, not by that which is preſent, but by that which is to come; not by what we feel, but according to his own promiſe; it will ſhew us by a delightful manifeſtation, the period and concluſion of God's Deſign, and cauſe us not to judg of his works by the firſt rough, and leſs amiable draught. Faith will ſhew us, That Anger and Love may very well conſiſt together; and that the ruder blows that make us groan and ſigh, may be to poliſh and to fit us for his Heavenly Temple. This will hold us up, when our ſenſe is puzzled, and our feet are like to ſlide; it ſets before our eyes not only the firſt

corrections, that are painful to the fleſh, but the end of the Lord, *and that he is* (Jam. 5. 11.) *very pitiful, and of tender mercy*: It ſhews us the Juſtice and Equity of God's proceedings, that there is nothing in them but what is highly reaſonable and neceſſary, even when they ſeem to be ſevere: That they are needful to keep us from wandring, and to prevent our ſleeping the ſleep of Death: And that thoſe heavy Croſſes that tire and weary our Spirits, may be ſent to promote our Eternal Reſt: And that the deepneſs of our Groans here, may cauſe us hereafter to ſing louder Hallelujahs.

3. Faith will greatly help us, as it both diſcovers and fortifies us againſt the Power of Satan and his Wiles, tho theſe deſigns of his are inviſible, and ſo very little known, and yet the more dangerous for being ſo. In thoſe doleful Troubles that I my ſelf have experienced; in all thoſe terrible Reflections, and overwhelming Fears, I was not ſenſible of any Agency of Evil Spirits, but that all my Thoughts and my Fears were the product of my own mind; though I am now apt to believe, That ſome of thoſe ſtrange Thoughts that I now and then had of God, and thoſe ſudden Terrors that pierced my Soul, muſt have had in them ſomething of the Cruelty and Malice of Satan, they were ſo very terrible. I do verily believe, That people do *very much wrong both the Devil and melancholy people*, in calling the unavoidable

voidable effects of their diſeaſe, the temptations of Satan; and the Language of that diſeaſe, a compliance with them: They do both aſcribe to the Devil a greater power than he hath, and vex the diſeaſed perſon more than they need to do: For tho' I do not queſtion, but that Evil Spirit, through the permiſſion of God, is the Cauſe of many painful ſickneſſes that come upon our Bodies; yet there are alſo many ſuch that are the reſult of a diſordered motion of the natural Spirits, and in which he hath nothing at all to do. But as 'tis the Common Cuſtom of Cruel and Barbarous perſons, to ſet upon the weak, and to trample on thoſe that are already thrown down; ſo 'tis very frequent for the Devil to take occaſion from our bodily indiſpoſitions, to attack and moleſt our Spirits, which are bereaved even of that force which they uſed to have, when the Houſe in which they dwelt was at eaſe, and free from thoſe diſabilities that they are always under at ſuch ſeaſons: For 'tis then night with us, and in the night thoſe Beaſts of prey do range abroad, which kept their dens during the brightneſs of the day; but however it be, whatſoever agency there is of Evil Spirits in our troubles, either upon our underſtandings, our paſſions, or our imaginations, this Grace of Faith will unveil their deſigns, and baffle all their Stratagems. Epheſ. 6. 16. *Above all, take the ſhield of faith, wherewith ye ſhall be able to quench all the fiery darts of Satan.* And that this is ſo very neceſſary, appears by *Luke* 22. 31, 32. *Satan hath deſired to winnow you as wheat; but I have*

have prayed that thy faith fail not. There is nothing againſt which that Engineer of Hell levels his Batteries with a greater fury; there is nothing can lay us open to greater danger, than either downright unbelief, or the weakneſs of our Faith. And Faith not exerciſed, is like Weapons of War lying by us, they ruſt, and are no way ſerviceable. For whileſt this remains in exerciſe, we perſevere in our Watch; and the God, whom it ſhews us looking on, comes to our aſſiſtance in every time of need; as alſo does that Redeemer who has Conquered the Devil by his Death and Reſurrection, and at whoſe glorious name thoſe Evil Spirits tremble and are afraid.

IV. Faith will greatly help us under the apprehenſions of God's diſpleaſure, as it leads us to the conſideration of Chriſt as Crucified. See Dr. *Owen*, on *Pſal.* 130. *p.* 279. It is eaſie indeed, to learn the notion of Faith; but a thing of more difficulty to experience the efficacy and the power of it: For a Man to have a ſight of that within him, which would condemn him, and for which he is troubled, and at the ſame time to have a diſcovery of that without, which will juſtify him, and to rejoyce therein, is that which he is not led unto, but by Faith in the myſtery of the Goſpel. If we pore upon our own Qualifications, Duties, Evidences, and the like, we ſhall, by a continued circulation of uneaſie thoughts, but increaſe our own trouble; the imperfection and the faultineſs of all that we have done, or are able to do, will fill our minds

minds with perplexity and diſtreſs; the Holineſs and the Spirituality of the Law of God will kill our moſt forward hopes: Our beſt way therefore is not to ſit ſtill, where we are bewailing our miſeries, and the ſadneſs of our Caſe; but to ariſe, and to run to the City of Refuge that is before us; when we are wounded with the ſenſe of Sin, with our weeping eyes and with our grieved hearts to look up to Chriſt, of whom the Brazen Serpent was a Type: When the burthen of our iniquities ſinks us down, and makes us groan, we muſt go to him, in whom the weary and the heavy-laden find reſt. To that Goſpel, which as it reveals and manifeſts abundance of Sin in us, does at the ſame time manifeſt Righteouſneſs in Chriſt; while the one terrifies us with the fear of Hell, the other will refreſh us with the hope of Heaven. The Blood of Jeſus does extinguiſh the Wrath of God; and as it does make us ſafe, it does alſo make us holy; for it cleanſes from all iniquity: This is the ſhelter and the healing of a Soul that is in danger and diſeaſed. How many Souls have caſt their Anchor in the dark, when all comfort has fail'd them for many days; and have obtained ſupport and relief, by ſaying, That if they periſh'd, they would periſh at the feet of Chriſt. And he that is the Lamb of God, ſo full of meekneſs and of pity, is too gracious to let any periſh there. As a Prieſt he died for his Enemies: He is a meek King; tho' he be upon a Throne of Majeſty, and a place of Joy and Glory, yet he will admit mourners into his preſence.

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He is a King of poor and afflicted perſons, and a Prince of Peace; and as he hath Beams of Majeſty, ſo he hath Bowels of Compaſſion. What Mercy may we not expect from ſo gracious a Mediator, that took our Nature on him, that he might be Gracious? Let us therefore go to God by Chriſt, who has ſatisfied his Juſtice by his Death; and who, without him, is to us Sinners as a conſuming fire: Let us go boldly to his Throne, in the name of Jeſus, and we ſhall find that the God of whom we were afraid, will become our Friend; and we ſhall experience him to be better to us than we ever thought he would have been. Our unbelieving hearts, whilſt they are ſuch, will be full of darkneſs and of trouble; but upon our Faith, the Storm will ceaſe, and the Morning will begin to dawn upon us; and inſtead of that wrath which we feared, and had deſerved, we ſhall find there is Mercy with the Lord, and plenteous Redemption, *Pſal.* 130. The firſt thing that a convinced awakened ſinner thinks of, is his own danger, and how he may avoid the Wrath of God, and what it is that he muſt do in order to it; now it is not to be accompliſhed by pompous, ceremonious Services, not by external mortifications, nor by offering the fruit of his Body for the ſin of his own Soul; but by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt and his Death, by the means of which God is become propitious and favourable to us. And the firſt view that as (one ſays) an humble Soul is to take of Chriſt, is, of his being a Saviour, as made a Sin and a Curſe, and obeying to the death.

And

And Chriſt muſt be conſidered, not only with reſpect to the Excellencies of his perſon; but as cloathed with his Garments of Blood, and the Qualifications of a Mediator and a Reconciler; and this renders him the fit object of a Sinners Faith. If we think of God, without thinking of Chriſt, he is vaſtly terrible and amazing to us; but in and through him, thoſe otherwiſe-overwhelming apprehenſions become very pleaſant and comfortable to us. Let us honour the Love that he hath ſhewed in him with admiring thoughts, and never have low, nor mean apprehenſions of his Grace. Chriſt is near unto God, and pitiful to us; able to help us, and moſt willing to do ſo; for thoſe that come unto him, he will in no wiſe caſt out. He will not upbraid us for our former follies; he will not encreaſe our grief; but when he ſees us once lying at his feet, and waſhing them with the tears of an unfeigned humiliation, he will raiſe us up, and bid us be of good cheer.

V. Faith will remove the troubles that we have from the ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure, by conveying to us that life and ſtrength from Chriſt, which will enable us to ſubdue all our ſpiritual Enemies, *Phil.* 4. 13. It will bring him to us; and when he is in our Veſſel, let the Waves threaten us with never ſo formidable a noiſe, we are ſure not to be caſt away: And all the Spectres that affright us, will vaniſh, if we do but hear him once ſay, as to his Diſciples, *It is I, be not afraid.* This Grace will unite

unite us to Chriſt, and communicate to us of his Power in the ſeveral meaſures that we need; and without his aſſiſtance, long and ſore afflictions will tire our Spirits, and deſtroy our Hope. He is neceſſary for us; for he has a perfect knowledg of our Enemies, of their Force, their Policies, and their Deſigns; He has by his own Combat learn'd to Fight, and by his Experience can teach us to get the Victory; neither the multitude, nor violence, nor obſtinacy of our Enemies, can hinder the Succeſs, and the glory of his Triumph. *Col.* 1. 11. *He prayeth that they might be ſtrengthned with all might*; becauſe as we have to do with divers Enemies, and are ſick of divers Infirmities, we have need to receive not one or two kinds of ſtrength, but many different ones: * For as in nature you ſee the ſtrength of Bodies is different, one reſiſting one thing, and yielding to another; one has the virtue to repulſe the force of one Element, but not to guard it ſelf from another: So in a manner is it in the Souls of Men; ſuch a Man will free himſelf from the temptation of one ſin, that will not be able to defend himſelf from another; ſuch a Man will reſiſt the temptations of proſperity, whom adverſity will overthrow; ſuch an one will bear troubles for a while, whom the length or tediouſneſs of them will overcome; and if one of our Spiritual Enemies ſucceed againſt us, we are undone for ever: Therefore, as the Apoſtle ſays, we have need to have recourſe to Chriſt, who can furniſh us with skill and ſtrength, to defeat whatſoever ſtands in the way

* Vide *Daille* in loc.

way of our Peace, or our Salvation. To have one on our ſide that has returned from the Field of Battel as a Conqueror, is a mighty encouragement and privilege: Such is our Lord, he is a Victorious and a Triumphant Saviour, he will not leave his Conqueſts incompleat, for he goes on Conquering and to Conquer; and the glory of his enterprizes has not fill'd him with diſdain or contempt of the poor and needy; for he that is the King of *Zion*, is, as I ſaid before, a meek and lowly King. By Faith in Chriſt we obtain his Spirit, which by opening our eyes, will ſhew us that Fountain of Living-waters, where we may both quench our thirſt, and waſh away our filth. This Spirit will take away the ſting of guilt, and ſweeten the Croſs that was very bitter to us; and when our Lord is come to help us, when we know that he is afflicted in our affliction, that yoak which gall'd us before, will become as an Ornament about our Necks; and when we have the pardon of our ſins, and the hope of God's acceptance, that affliction that we thought a burthen too heavy for us to bear, will become light and eaſie to us. *Out of the devourer ſhall come forth ſweetneſs.* From thoſe very fears that overwhelmed us, ſhall ſpring glorious hopes; and thoſe hearts which a ſlaviſh fear of the Wrath had contracted, ſhall be enlarged with a ſenſe of his Goodneſs and his Love; and we ſhall not look upon him as an Enemy, but as a Friend; not as a Judge, but as a Father. Iſa. 33.24. *The inhabitants ſhall not ſay, I am ſick: the people that dwell therein ſhall be forgiven their ini-*

iniquities. Alas! when God leaves us, the ſmalleſt danger terrifies us, the leaſt Dart of Satan makes an impreſſion on our ſpirits; the leaſt trouble ſinks ſuch low, ſuch inconſiderable creatures are we: But if the Lord be with us, if Chriſt be on our ſide, neither the Law, nor Sin, nor Death can hinder us from bidding a defiance to all that is againſt us, 2 *Cor.* 15. 56, 57.

VI. Faith will give us relief under the apprehenſions of God's diſpleaſure for our Sin, as it will ſhew us the period and concluſion of thoſe miſeries which we now are groaning under; our Senſe will tell us, that our Troubles are tedious and very long; but our Faith will rectify our Judgment, and ſhew us, that tho' we have been, in heavineſs, yet it is but for a ſeaſon; our Senſe makes us think our night of weeping very long; but Faith ſets the morning before our eyes: And indeed, when that comes, the time of ſorrow will appear to have been very ſhort; our Weeping will bear no proportion with our Joy; nor our Groans with our Hallelujahs: The luſter of our Crown, and the glories of our Triumph, will make us to forget the Blood, and Sweat, and Labour of the Combat, tho' whil'ſt here below we thought it hard. Faith will wipe away our Tears, and cauſe us to take a further proſpect, and to ſee where they now are that were mourners once as well as we. *Job* is no more wondred at upon a Dunghil by his Friends, but ſhining with glory in the Higheſt Heaven. *Heman* is

no

no more diſtracted with terrors; but infinitely pleaſed with the ſight and enjoyment of his God. There is *Aſaph* alſo ſinging praiſes to him, tho' he thought, and was afraid that his Mercies were clean gone, and that he would be favourable no more. Faith will ſolace your drooping ſpirits, by cauſing you frequently to remember, that tho' God is angry, yet it is but for a moment; and that tho' you have now ſour Grapes, yet they are only to prepare you for a better reliſh of the Joys above; it is this that ſets our feet upon a Rock, and produces in our fainting Souls a ſecret ſupport and hope, that tho' it be night with us for the preſent, yet that it will not always be ſo. *Rev.* 3. 21. *To him that overcometh will I grant to ſit with me on my throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my father on his throne.* The dangers and diſtreſſes on the way, will make us better to like our home. All the years of our Life, tho' ſpent in ſore afflictions and anxieties, will be but a very little ſpace, when we are Landed at our haven of Joy and Immortality.

CHAP. IX.

Of the direct Acts of Faith, as the most suitable to a distressed Soul; as also of waiting upon God: With several considerations to enforce it. And that a Person in great Affliction, ought to hope that it may be better with him.

THird *General.* Look forward to Jesus Christ, when you find things perplex'd and troubled in your own souls; and indeed, in the direct Acts of Faith, we have nobler objects to converse withal than when we look and pore upon our guilty selves; when we look into our troubled hearts, we can see nothing besides confusion and disorder there; but we may at the same time discern an allsufficient fulness in God and Christ to relieve our wants. It is a long and a tedious work to consider by the several steps by which we are to proceed in such a Case whether we have believed or not; our Duty is at this very instant to believe, *i. e.* under a penitent sense of what we have done amiss, to look unto Christ for help. We must carefully distinguish between Justification and Sanctification; between those habits and those holy actions that are the effects of Faith, and Faith it self. Our Sanctification is full of imperfection; but that Righteousness of Christ, wherein alone we are to trust for acceptance with God, is compleat and perfect. These are

things to be considered by people under spiritual distress; but if you be under *the disease of Melancholly* to any great degree, I am sensible, that neither this, nor any other direction will be altogether available. It is such a stubborn and obstinate disease, that it is not to be overcome by rational methods and perswasion, no more than a broken Bone can be set again by words and talk. 'Tis only God that is fully acquainted with the Nature and Violence of this worst of Distempers; 'tis his Power and his Grace alone that can chase it away; and all those things that depend upon consideration, and that may succeed in other Cases, have not the same tendency to good in this, because it is our disease always to pore and think, and it is our misery that we cannot think to any purpose. I beseech you to remember, that the foundation of all our Peace and Comfort is Christ alone, and Faith in him; Mortification, Self-denial, and other Graces, are the superstructure that is laid upon it; but truly all that we can do in great and deep affliction, and sore distresses of Soul, is only to look up to Christ as a poor wounded bleeding Man does look and cry to one that passes on the Road for help; and our Saviour and our Physician is so compassionate, that he will regard us, tho' we are able to say little more than this, *Have mercy on us, thou son of David.* Under the prospect of our great infirmities, and of the manifold imperfections of our Duties, and under the sense of our own nothingness and unworthiness, let us humbly betake our selves to

Chriſt, he will not diſdain, nor ſlight our approaches to him, nor leave them unattended with ſome manifeſtations of reviving Grace and Mercy.

IV. When you have done all this, you muſt wait till the Lord appear to your relief and help. Pſal. 123. 2. *Behold, as the eyes of ſervants look unto the hands of their maſters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hands of her miſtreſs; ſo our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us.* Tho' his ſtroaks be very ſmart, yet we are ſure that we have deſerved them; tho' his delays of help be tedious, yet we have merited at his hands a much longer delay: We are as ſo many poor Slaves indeed, under the bondage of our fears and our troubles; but alas! we have brought our ſelves to that ſlavery, and we muſt look unto God till he ſet us free again; and tho' our Maſter be angry with us, yet he is a Maſter ſtill; and that relation that we have to him, that Intereſt which we have in his Covenant, may be ſomewhat ſupporting and comfortable to us; 'tis a more eaſie thing to bear any trouble that continues for a Week, or for a Month, and then paſſes away; but this will be the tryal of our Faith, if we can maintain our dependance and truſt in God when he afflicts us very ſore for many Months or Years together: If we ſee no ſign of help, no proſpect of deliverance, we are ſtill to wait till the time, even the ſet time to favour us be come; and this muſt be done with patience, with a ſilent and a quiet re-

reſignation to his Will; it is the product of a calm and a quiet Soul that is ſatisfied in the Juſtice of Providence, tho' it be ſevere; only with this limitation, that you have the freedom and the command of your natural ſpirits; for if they be put into a hurry and confuſion by a diſeaſe, then indeed you can neither perform this nor any other ſpiritual action with calmneſs and deliberation; but in other Caſes, where the diſorder of the ſpirits is not ſo great and violent, *He that believes, makes not haſte*, Iſa. 28. 16. is not furious and precipitant; and indeed it is our common fault that we would have the help of God to come juſt when we will, to be eaſed as ſoon as ever we find our ſelves in pain; to get to Heaven immediately when we find our ſelves no longer fit for ſervice here on Earth, and to have an unpainful and eaſie paſſage thither; but God that is not ſo tender of our Fleſh as of our Spirits, will ſuffer us long to be in trouble, that all may know by their own feeling, how evil and how bitter a thing it is to ſin, and that by the methods that pleaſe us leaſt, he may do us the moſt good; and by our temporal inconveniencies promote our eternal welfare. We ought in patience, in an humble and a quiet ſilence to poſſeſs our ſouls, and to approve of all the diſpenſations and the works of God; for how it is poſſible for us not to manifeſt our ſenſe of grief, even in doleful expreſſions, I know not: When a Man is under a burthen that he cannot bear, or when he is in ſharp pain, 'tis natural for him to groan and to ſigh; 'tis a thing which he cannot help. It

would be, as I have intimated before, a needleſs labour, to adviſe people under great affliction, and ſpiritual diſtreſs, not to complain; for ſay what we will, they cannot but complain: Can a Man think God his Enemy, and his Soul in danger, and Hell like to be his portion? Can he ſee his Comforts wither, and his Hopes expire, and others at eaſe, while he is in wo and trouble, and not be greatly concerned? or be ſo, and not expreſs his concern for the ſadneſs of his Caſe? Blame not people that are under *the Terrors of the Lord*, for complaining; if your ſouls were embittered with Wormwood and Gall, you would complain as much as they. Can they be ſilent, when they think that God is departed from them? and as they fear, departed for ever? Can they be in ſo terrible calamity, as quiet, and as much unmoved as when they were at eaſe? Our bleſſed Lord himſelf, in the days of his fleſh, when his ſuffering encreaſed upon him, *offered up prayers with ſtrong crying and tears*, Heb. 5. 7. And in the pain of his inexpreſſible agonies on the Croſs, he cryed out with a loud voice, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Matt. 27. 46. And *Pſal.* 32. 3. *When I kept ſilence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.* And he aſſigns the Reaſon of it in *Verſe* 4. *For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me, my moiſture is turned into the drought of ſummer, Selah.* There are ſome natural, unavoidable expreſſions of grief and ſorrow which are conſiſtent with that waiting and dependance upon God, which I have mentioned before; nor is it contrary

trary to this waiting, to desire a speedy and a quick deliverance; you may lawfully pray for it: For which we have several instances, as Psal. 22. 19. *Be not thou far from me, O Lord; O my strength, haste thee to help me.* Psal 31. 2. *Bow down thine ear to me, deliver me speedily.* Psal. 69. 17. *Hide not thy face from thy servant, for I am in trouble, hear me speedily.* And so *Psal.* 102. 2. Psal. 40. 17. *Make no tarrying, O my God.* You may in imitation of so great examples, frame your requests after this or the like manner; but if, when you have done so, relief does not immediately come, if your distress and your anguish remain, you must be content still to wait, and to justify your Maker in his delays, and in his proceedings towards you, tho' they be very terrible; as in *Psal.* 22. 1, 2, 3. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the day time, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent: But thou art holy, O thou that inhabits the praises of Israel.* Those that aver Religion to be in all respects an easie thing, know not what they say; did they know what it were to be under the sense of God's displeasure, and under violent, painful distempers for many Months together, and yet to wait and to be satisfied with that Providence that thinks fit to continue on them long pains, and terrible fears, they would find it is not such an easie matter to be truly Religious. But that you that are exercised with severe and sharp Tryals, may arrive to this excellent disposition of being able still to wait on God.

Conſ. I. How long has God waited upon you! How long did he knock at your doors! How did he entreat, and beſeech, and call to you, ere you let him in! How did he follow you from day to day, and from Sabbath to Sabbath! How did he wait for your Repentance one year after another, doubling and renewing his expoſtulations with you, ſaying as to *Jeruſalem*, Jer. 13. laſt. *Wilt thou not be made clean? When ſhall it once be?* And if you denied to hear the Calls of the Great God for ſo long a ſpace, Can you think it hard that he does not grant a preſent anſwer to your Prayers? Would you have help on a ſudden, when you made the *Eternal* wait for your hearts ſo very long? He waited on us to do us good, when we ran from him, when we ſpent our Thoughts, our Strength, our Lives, and our Time in vain; after all our rebellious, our undutifulneſs and diſobedience, he moved upon our ſouls by his Spirit; he excited us to mind our Intereſt, and gave us ſpace wherein to repent. Let us remember theſe things to humble us, and to encreaſe our patience, and to keep us from thinking it ſtrange, if God, even for a long time delay his help.

Conſ. II. The Soveraignty, the Greatneſs, and the Wiſdom of God: We are his own, and he may do what he will with us; being his creatures, he may cauſe us to ſerve to whatſoever purpoſes he pleaſes; and his Wiſdom will guide even our miſeries to make them uſeful to others, tho' they be ſharp and ſevere to us; his ways are far above us; his

his Greatneſs and his Glory being ſo far above our thoughts, the moſt ſuitable temper of a creature towards ſo great a God, is to be ſilent, and to wait, to ſee what a period Infinite Wiſdom will at length put to thoſe Diſpenſations of his Providence, which are ſo diſmal and ſo terrible to us: If all our Comforts that we have in this world, all that we moſt valued and eſteemed, be taken from us; if our Afflictions be long and tedious, and accompanied with ſuch ſtinging particularities as have ſcarcely been mingled with the Croſſes of others that have gone before us. God may do what he will with us; we can have nothing to ſay to him, becauſe we are the work of his own hands. Our hearts in ſore diſtreſſes are apt to ſay, Why are we ſo much and ſo long afflicted? Why are we compaſſed with ſuch terrible Calamities, when others are at eaſe, that to appearance have ſinned as much as we? But theſe firſt riſings of Murmuring and Diſquiet, are to be reſiſted by the conſiderations of the Majeſty and the Greatneſs of God; who may put his Creatures to what uſe he pleaſes, and ſo as may, tho with their own ſmart, promote the good of others, and their own final good. Tho *Job*, as Mr. *Charnock* obſerves, *Diſcourſe on the Attributes*, pag. 781. were a pattern of Patience, yet he had deep Tinctures of Impatience; he often complains of God's uſage of him, as too hard, and ſtands much upon his own Integrity; but when God comes, in the latter Chapters of that Book, to juſtifie his carriage towards him, he chargeth him not as a Criminal,

nal, but conſiders him only as his Vaſſal; he might have found flaw enough in *Job*'s carriage, and corruption enongh in *Job*'s Nature, to have cleared the Equity of his Proceedings as a Judg; but he uſeth no other medium to convince him, but the Greatneſs of his Majeſty, the Unlimitedneſs of his Soveraignty; which ſo appales the good man, that he puts his finger on his mouth, and ſtands mute with a ſelf-abhorrency before him as a Sovereign, rather than a Judge. His Wiſdom alſo, that makes the Night to precede the Day, and Storms to clear the Air, and make way for a fairer Seaſon, ought to ſilence and pacifie our Souls, *Iſa.* 30. 18. *And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; for the Lord is a God of judgment; bleſſed are all they that wait for him.* He knows the fitteſt times and ſeaſons wherein to heal our Diſeaſes, to remove our Fears, and to do us good.

Conſ. III. How great the Mercies are that we are to wait for; 'tis for Heaven and Glory, and we have his Promiſe, That our Faith and our Patience ſhall not be in vain, *Iſa.* 35. 3,4,5,6,7. And after all the dangers, the ſnares, and hindrances, and temptations of this world, to come to Salvation at the laſt, is ſo great a Mercy, that it is ſurely worth ſtaying for: Tho we labour Six days, yet the reſt of the Sabbath does refreſh our Spirits; and ſo will after the ſufferings of this mortal Life, that Eternal Sabbath that is to be kept above with God, give us great Refreſhment;

freſhment; our time on earth is a ſeaſon wherein by ſeveral Trials and Afflictions to prepare us for that Happineſs and Glory: As the Night does affright us, the Morning will ſurely bring us Joy: It is but a little while, and our Lord will come and ſave us: Let us not ſurrender our ſelves to our Spiritual Enemies, tho we are ſtraitly preſs'd; for our Saviour is marching to our Relief. Jam. 5. 7. *Behold the Husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter Rain. Be ye alſo patient, ſtabliſh your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.* The Husbandman gives not his Grain for loſt, tho it be covered with Snow and Storm; he expects to ſee it riſe with the returning Spring; ſo neither ſhould we deſpair of finding Comfort, tho the Prayers that we have made, bring us no preſent ſatisfaction; You know *David* had the promiſe of a Kingdom, but what ſtrange Difficulties did he meet withal? And what a long time was it, before he came to ſit upon a Peaceful Throne? We muſt have Conflicts before we get the Victory; we muſt run our Race, and ſtrive hard, ere we get the Reward; but when it ſhall once be beſtowed upon us, it will abundantly recompence us for all our Tears, and all our Heavineſs; we are to take up our Croſs daily; every day on earth will afford us cauſe of Patience; we are to watch, for all our time is but as a moment to Eternity: Let not our Lord, that will bleſs us with a long and unſpeakable Felicity, have cauſe to ſay to us, as he did to his ſorrowful Diſciples, *Could ye not watch with me one hour?*

Mat.

Mat. 26. 40. He looks on, knows our weakneſs, and will give us help; he could immediately ſolace, and refreſh, and ſave us if he would; but ſeeing that he is not pleaſed ſo to do, let us humbly be ſilent, and acquieſce in the Wiſdom of his Appointment and Decree; for tho he delay, he is not unmindful of our ſorrows; and in the very Minute that is moſt for his Glory, and for our Good, he will come and ſave us. *Iſa.* 64. 4. *For ſince the beginning of the world, men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye ſeen, O God, beſides thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.*

V. Entertain a ſecret hope, that it will not always be thus ſad and diſmal with you. Tho you have made ſeveral Prayers that have not yet received a Gracious Anſwer of Peace; yet pray ſtill, and be not diſcouraged, but like blind *Bartimæus*, cry the more earneſtly: You know that the Woman of *Canaan* perſevered in her attendance on our Lord, tho the words he ſpake ſeemed to have in them a great deal of ſharpneſs and ſeverity; yet ſhe was reſolved not to leave him, nor be denied; and at the laſt, our Saviour commended highly that Faith, of which he ſeem'd to take no notice before. *It is good that a man ſhould both hope, and quietly wait to ſee the ſalvation of God*, Lam. 3 27. The reaſon whereof is alledged, *v.* 31, 32. *For the Lord will not caſt off for ever; but tho he cauſe grief, yet will he have compaſſion according to the multitude of his mercies.* Tho every thing that you look upon within your own hearts, terrific and perplex your thoughts,

thoughts, yet the vaſtneſs of that Mercy that is in God, and which through his Son he is willing to communicate to you, may afford you ſupport and relief; the very poſſibility of help, tho never ſo remote, may a little quiet and calm your ſouls; for tho you ſee nothing for the preſent, but Frowns and Anger in the Face of God; yet you cannot, you ought not to ſay, that it will never ſhine again; tho his ſtrokes are increaſed, and every day more painful than they were the day before, yet you muſt not then conclude, That he who chaſtens for your profit, will not lay aſide the Rod: Tho you are ſinking with your fears, and you have no power left, yet lay hold on the ſtrength of God, he will not ſtrike off your trembling hand, but encourage your dependance and your truſt in him; you are not everlaſtingly periſht, you have not yet received your final doom, it is poſſible that you may eſcape. There is great comfort in a *May be I ſhall be ſaved, even tho by fire*; tho more in this, *I fully believe I ſhall be ſo*; As Zeph. 2. 3. *It may be you ſhall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger.* Joel 2. 13, 14. *Who knows but he will return, and leave a Bleſſing?* Tho you are afflicted and toſt with Tempeſts, and not comforted, yet there is a proſpect of a quiet ſhore. Chriſt is not far off with his pleaſant and reviving Conſolations: Hold out a little longer, and your expectation ſhall not be in vain; length of pain, and continuance of ſorrow, does tire and ſpend the natural ſpirits; and long attendance upon God, without any manifeſtation of his appearance for our help, dulls our motions,

tions, enervates our ſouls, ſtrikes off the Wheels of our Chariots, and greatly tempts us to deſpair, and to ſay, Becauſe he does not help us, that he never will. Jer. 8. 18. *When I would comfort my ſelf againſt my ſorrow, my heart fainteth within me; for the harveſt is paſt, and the ſummer is ended, and we are not delivered.* But let us hope ſtill; for when we are at the loweſt, then is the proper ſeaſon for God to work; we are indeed altogether deſolate, but in him there is compleat and ſuitable Salvation; it is an honour that we give to his promiſe when we believe it, and rely upon it when all things ſeem flatly to oppoſe our Faith, *Iſa.* 8. 17. *I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth his face from the houſe of Jacob, and I will look for him,* Pſal. 27. 13, 14. When we let our hope go, we pull up the ſluce, we deluge our ſelves with Miſeries and Calamities that are inexpreſſible; tho that God that raiſes the dead, does many times after long deſpair, give our departed hopes a Reſurrection, and makes our broken bones to rejoice: So very merciful and ſo good is he.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Shewing, that People under great Trouble and Anguiſh of Soul, are not to look for Aſſurance, or great Joy on a ſudden; but as far as they can, to enquire into the Reaſons of God's Diſpleaſure towards them, and to look up to him through the Great Mediator; and not further to provoke him: As alſo how they may know when Afflictions are ſent in Wrath, and when in Love.

VI. WHen you are under the ſenſe of the Anger of God, do not look for aſſurance and great triumphs of Soul on a ſudden; if you have ſupports, 'tis a great matter; thoas Mr. *Bayne* uſed to ſay, You do not know what Spiritual Feſtivities and Jubilation means. If you have daily bread to maintain your Life, 'tis what you ought thankfully to acknowledge, tho your Tables be not covered with Dainties, and tho you do not fare deliciouſly every day: They were but Three of the Diſciples whom our Lord admitted to the ſight of his Glorious Transfiguration; he does not treat all his Followers with the ſame Diſhes, with the ſame Joys and Tranſports: We are ſufficiently priviledged, if we are in the Verge of his Family, if we are adopted, tho there be ſeveral that are great-

greater Favourites than we, and whom he is pleaſed to ſet at his Right Hand, and on his Left. He may chuſe whom he will, to be his beloved Diſciples, to whom he will manifeſt more of his Preſence and his Love, and an extraordinary Care: Do not think, that becauſe you have read of ſome that have had Heaven to meet them with Angelical Triumphs and Conſolations, that therefore you muſt drink as full draughts of the ſame Rivers of Pleaſure, or that they will follow you as much as them in this Wilderneſs. Some of the Eminent Servants of Chriſt, that have been very laborious and uſeful, that have been remarkable for their Patience, their Faith, and their Self-denial, have been bleſt with a nearer acceſs to God, and have ſeen more of the Lord of Hoſts in his Glory; but it is enough for ſuch unprofitable Servants, and ſuch great Sinners as we have been, that we look for the Promiſed Land: Tho we have not many Cluſters of the Grapes of Paradiſe, to chear us on the way, our Maſter uſes us very well, if he do not turn us out of doors; tho we fare not ſo well as others do, it is a Mercy that we have but the Crumbs that fall from his Table. This advice is needful, becauſe if we look for extraordinary Joy and Delight, and then find it not after long waiting, we ſhall be ready to give over our work, when we do not receive that Pay, in the hope of which we flattered our ſelves a long time. Becauſe ſome in a Tranſport, after long Deſertion, and ſore Tryals, and after long Abſence of Chriſt, have cryed out, *He is come,*

he

he is come, oh he is now come, whom I longed to ſee. Now Salvation is come to my houſe: Now I am fully ſatisfied; now I am content to dye. Oh the Riches, the Depths, the Greatneſs of the Grace of God! Now I ſee that my Fears were too great, my Thoughts of him too low. I ſee that he that inhabits Eternity, even the Great Jehovah, will deal familiarly with the Sons of Men. I could not have thought, that ever I, that was ſo faint, ſhould be revived; that I, that was ſo full of Deſpair, ſhould be full of Hope; that I who was ſo near Hell, ſhould be brought to the Gates of Heaven; but my own experience now tells me, that ſo it is. Cant. 2. 3, 4. *I ſate down under his ſhadow with great delight, and his fruit was ſweet to my taſte; he brought me to the banqueting houſe, and his banner over me was love.* This is the language of thoſe whom the King of Heaven delights to honour: Theſe are the Golden Veſſels which he fills with the Oyl of Gladneſs: Theſe are the *Elijahs* to whom he ſends his Chariots of Fire to convey them home. But this is not the Lot of all his Subjects; this is not what we are certainly to expect; if we go to Heaven, tho by Diſpenſations that have in them a great deal of Cloud and Darkneſs, yet it will be very well for us; if we believe, we ſhall be ſafe; tho ſome there be that with *Simeon* embrace their Saviour in their Arms, and ſee his Salvation before they dye, for the ſight of which we muſt ſtay till after death; the greateſt part of Believers have a comfortable, and reviving hope through Grace that they ſhall come to Heaven; but few there are that are ſo well

aſſured of it, as to have no remaining doubts and fears: But notwithſtanding what I have ſaid, we muſt endeavour to work out our Salvation, and by a diligence in good works, and holy duties, to ſtrive that we may be among the bleſſed number of theſe excellent Saints, whom God is pleaſed to clothe with the Garments of Praiſe and Joy: The paſſionate feelings of Joy are not eſſential to Holineſs; tho when they are beſtowed, they do greatly quicken our obedience, and inlarge our hearts. If we reſolvedly adhere to God, he will give us what will be ſufficient for us: Our very fears ſhall encreaſe our comfort afterwards; by the way in which we did leaſt expect it, ſhall Joy and Pleaſure come as the Ravens, greedy Creatures, brought meat unto the Prophet.

VII. Enquire into the Cauſes of God's Anger; he is never angry, as I have ſaid before, but when there is very great reaſon, when we force him to be ſo: What is that accurſed thing in our hearts, or in our lives, for which God hides his face, and frowns upon us? What particular diſobedience to his Commands is it, for which he has taken up the Rod? Job 10. 2. *I will ſay unto God, Do not condemn me, ſhew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me. q. d.* Lord, my Troubles and my Sorrows are very well known. Every Eye beholds my Calamity, every Ear is aſtoniſhed with the report of my ſore diſtreſs; and all that know me, or have heard of me, wonder why I am, above all others in the world, made ſo miſerable a man, that there has not been

Vid. Carylin loc.

been an example of the like great and ſtrange affliction ſince the beginning of the world. I my ſelf, that feel theſe wonderful ſorrows, am moſt of all perplext; ſhew me for what, and why it is, that I ſhould be ſo: He was an upright man; and not being conſcious either of ſecret allowed ſin, or open Tranſgreſſion, might be at a great loſs to know the cauſe of his affliction; but for the moſt part of us, who are as far from the Grace which he had in his Trouble, as we are from the Riches which he had in his Proſperity; we may ſoon know that God is angry for our ſin; and yet at the ſame time we muſt not ceaſe to be ſollicitous to know what are the particular ſins that have made him to tear us up by the roots, to throw us down as with a whirlwind; what it is that has made him to be ſo long angry with us, and ſo long to delay his help; that if any evil be undiſcovered in our ſouls, we may lament it with a ſeaſonable grief, and get a pardon for it. It is not the common Courſe of God's Providence, to cover his Servants with ſo thick a darkneſs as that is, which our Troubled Souls labour under in the day, or rather in the night of his Diſpleaſure: And therefore we may with Humility deſire to know why he proceeds with us in a way that is ſo ſingular; for it is ſome way delightful to the Underſtanding, to pierce into the Reaſons and the Cauſes of things. Pſal. 74. 1. *O God, why haſt thou caſt us off for ever? why doth thine Anger ſmoke againſt the ſheep of thy paſture?* How angry ſoever he be, we muſt make our Addreſſes to him; and ſeeing to be caſt off, to

be ſeparated from him, is a thing ſo terrible, he allows us to enquire into the Reaſons of his Proceedings, and to debate the Caſe; and our debate muſt end in Prayer and Supplication; as here, v. 2. and tho it be very true, that when a man is fallen into a Pit, the buſineſs of the poor man is not to inquire how he fell thither, but how he may be drawn up again, and eſcape the danger that has overtaken him; yet in this caſe of the ſenſe of God's Diſpleaſure, the knowledge of the Cauſes of it may produce many good effects, which tho they do not appear in our depths and troubles, yet will ſhew themſelves afterwards; they will cauſe us for ever to dread the ſame things which did bring upon us ſo many miſeries. As ſuppoſe in another caſe, a Mother that brings forth Children to the Grave, that only views them a while, and after all the pain of bringing them forth, and after all the care of their future welfare, ſees them one after another ſnatcht away, to know the Reaſon of this ſo terrible a ſtroke, will greatly ſupport her ſpirit; as ſuppoſe it be to wean her from Terreſtrial Comforts, and to give her thoſe that are Eternal; to take her Children away, and to give her more of God; to bury her dear Off-ſpring, that her declining Graces may have a Reſurrection, or that her Comfort in the Living, may be more ſenſible to her when there are ſo many dead: This will calm her ſoul, and make even a diſconſolate Mother to rejoice. Thus when a man is exerciſed with long and ſharp Sickneſs and Affliction, to know the Cauſes of it, may be uſeful to promote his Humiliation

tion at the preſent, and to make him avoid the like for the time to come, if he do recover.

VIII. When you are under a ſenſe of God's Diſpleaſure, flye to his Mercy and his Grace in Chriſt: When your Creator is angry, 'tis not any thing in this world can give you relief, but himſelf; flye from God, as abſolutely conſidered in his Greatneſs, Juſtice, Holineſs, and Majeſty; to him, as diſcovering himſelf through the Mediator: The Hills and the Mountains cannot be a ſhelter from his Wrath; whither can you go from his Preſence? Whither will not the ſenſe of his Anger, and your own guilty thoughts purſue you? Betake your ſelves to him, and when you think of him, think of him as a God, in whom there is the greateſt Tenderneſs and Pity, and of which all the Compaſſion that is in humane nature, is but a weak reſemblance; as it is all one with him in Temporal Deliverances, to ſave by many or by few; for what dangers can reſiſt Omnipotence? ſo 'tis as eaſie with him to forgive a Thouſand thouſand Sins, as one ſin. If we be never ſo unworthy and ſo vile, yet Mercy ſeeks no other qualification of its object, but that 'tis neceſſitous, and obnoxious to ruin; and it is a good way *to flye to his meer grace and mercy*; for we have undone our ſelves. Poring upon our ſelves does but encreaſe our load; we are apt to ſay in our diſtreſs, Were we ſo and ſo mortified to the world, were our hearts ſo purified and cleanſed, then we might approach him with ſome boldneſs, who is altogether ho-

ly; this is true, but yet we muſt firſt ask of him to make us ſuch, in whom he may delight: And as we ſorrowfully caſt our eyes upon our wounds and our miſeries, let us look at the ſame time to that Phyſician who has provided a Remedy for us by Chriſt, and who can heal all our backſlidings, and teach us to apply that Remedy: If we are the worſt and the moſt ſinful Creatures upon earth, yet is a Saviour tendered to our acceptance, and our choice; and if we will receive him, all our Tranſgreſſions, how heinous ſoever, will be blotted out. As we have a very deep ſenſe of Hell and Deſtruction, ſo let us have the moſt enlarged thoughts of the pardoning Grace of God; and to this we are encouraged by the diſcoveries that he hath made of himſelf, through his dear Son: His Forgiveneſs is like himſelf; it is (as one ſays) an Object for Faith alone, which can reſt in that which it cannot comprehend; and were not Forgiveneſs in God, ſomewhat beyond what men could imagine, no fleſh could be ſaved. Iſa. 55.88. *My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are my ways your ways, ſaith the Lord; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, ſo are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* It is not the manner of men, to paſs by multiplied Tranſgreſſions, as he doth: The conſideration of his Infinite Mercy removes all thoſe obſtructions, which our unbelief, viewing the greatneſs and aggravations of our ſins, throws in the way; and tho our ſins have been every way inexcuſable, and do upon every reflection that we make upon them, fright and trouble

Dr. Owen in Pſal. 130. p. 221.

trouble us, yet the Mercy of a God ſurely will yield us ſome relief; for there is no other reaſon why he does good to this or that ſinner, but his own Grace, *Hoſ.* 3.4. He freely chuſes, juſtifies, adopts, and renews the Souls of his Elect; 'tis all, not from their merit, or from any thing that he foreſaw in them, but from the good pleaſure of his will, *Eph.* 1. 5. All that he does for them, all that he will do for them to Eternity, will be to the *praiſe and glory of his own grace.* This is the true way to humble us, when we ſee nothing in our ſelves, but what expoſes us to miſery; and that is true Goſpel Obedience which is the fruit and product of his Love ſhed abroad in our hearts. This is the only Rock whereon we are to build our Comfort, when the Storm comes. This *Free Grace of God*, is that which the Saints admire on earth, which revives their drooping ſpirits, and which they will wonder at for ever. 'Tis a ſhelter from the accuſations and the malicious inſultings of the Devil; for tho he ſet our ſins, with all their overwhelming circumſtances before us; tho we cannot deny the charge, and believe that we are miſerable in our ſelves; yet do we reſolve to flye to the Mercy and the Love of God in Chriſt: We ſhould diſparage the Excellencies of his Nature, and the Offers of his Goodneſs, if we did not lay hold upon them: And this is that which ſome call a natural Novatianiſm in the timerous Conſciences of Convinced Sinners, whereby they doubt and queſtion pardon for Sins of Apoſtacy, and falling after Repentance.

IX. Beware of running into further ſin, and ſo to provoke God to further Anger: When our Hope is periſhed, there is nothing ſo evil, which we ſhall not dare to do: If help do not ſpeedily come, we are apt to ſay, it is in vain to pray; it is vain to look up to a God that has thrown us of. Jer. 2. 25. *Thou ſaidſt, There is no hope; no, for I have loved ſtrangers, and after them will I go.* You are loſt for ever, will the Devil ſay, and therefore it is all one whether you ſin or not, you can but ſtill be loſt; this is one of his fiery darts; and if by our compliance we ſuffer it to take hold upon us, it will terrifie us the more; he will rejoice at our fall, and put our Souls by every new Tranſgreſſion, into much more violent and ſcorching Flames: What monſtrous Injections, what unbecoming Thoughts of God, does he ſuggeſt; and alas how frequently do we entertain them! for they come thick upon us: In the time of God's diſpleaſure, when the edge of his Holy Spiritual Law does wound our Souls, what vaſt multitudes of Corruptions do we then diſcover, that we never ſaw before? How do our old Sins amaze us, and new ones ariſe and ſpring from them? And what can we do in the ſwelling of *Jordan*? What in ſo great an inundation, but endeavour in our poor feeble manner to look up to Chriſt for help. Beg the Spirit; for as one ſays, There is no heart ſo unclean, which this Spirit will not cleanſe; no ſoul ſo feeble, which he does not fortifie; none ſo ſorrowful, which he does not comfort; none ſo deſolate, which he does not cauſe to rejoice; none

none ſo ſlaviſh, which he does not ſet at liberty; none ſo ſick, which he does not heal; none ſo dead, which he does not quicken. Surely he will regard us, for he knows, that of our ſelves we cannot bear up againſt the Winds and Waves. And let us always remember, That among ſo many cruel Enemies, 'tis Unbelief that leads the Van: It encourages and draws them on; and when we have got the Victory over this, all the reſt will be daunted, and run away. By Unbelief we open our hearts, and let in all thoſe Thieves and Robbers which deprive us of our Peace. It is the defilement of our Conſciences by manifold acts of ſin, that makes us like the troubled Sea, which cannot reſt: And for a Conſcience guilty of many neglects, to lay claim to God's Mercy, is to do as we ſee Mountebanks ſometimes do, who wound their Fleſh, to try Concluſions on their own Bodies, how ſovereign the Salve is; yet often they come to feel the ſmart of their own Preſumption, by long and deſperate Wounds. Let us in the caſe even of ſore Afflictions, be afraid to ſin; for that Devil that tempts us, will immediately vex and torment us the more for it. *Sibbs Souls Conflict, p. 31.*

X. Miſtake not thoſe things for evidences of the certain Wrath of God, which perhaps are not really ſo. He may ſuſpend the expreſſions of his Love, tho he love us ſtill; as *Joſeph* had the tenderneſs of a Brother, whilſt his Brethren thought him very angry with them: Nay, in our ſecret ſupports we are not deſtitute altogether of his care, tho we know not how they come;

come: As the Metals that lye deep in the ground partake of the Influence of the Sun, tho he does not ſhine upon them with his Light. There are few Afflictions, but have rather the marks of a Fatherly Kindneſs, in the ſeaſonable Correction of our Faults, than the Marks of Diſpleaſure. No outward loſſes, no inward troubles, that are but for a time, are the certain ſigns of Wrath; no, tho they be very long, and very grievous; for it was not ſo in the caſe of *Job*. But *how ſhall I know* (will ſome ſay) *when Afflictions are in wrath*? It is a queſtion to be anſwered with great tenderneſs and caution. They are by Divines ſaid to be ſo: 1. When they come with great Violence, and ſuddenly deſtroy, as in the caſe of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, and in the Deluge. Pſal. 58. 9. *Before your pots can feel the thorns, he ſhall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in his wrath.* Nahum 1. 9. *He will make an utter end, affliction ſhall not riſe up the ſecond time.* And yet this muſt have ſome limitations; for a good man may be ſeized with a violent Diſeaſe, and ſuddenly dye, of whom we ought not to ſay, that he died by the Wrath of God. 2. When there is no Mercy diſcernable in the Croſs, but only what is evil. 3. When one Evil makes way for another, and none are ſanctified. 4. When the Affliction brings ſome ſpecial Sin to remembrance; and when Sin it ſelf deprives us of a Mercy; when Intemperance brings Sickneſs, Ambition Diſgrace; Covetouſneſs and an over-eager Deſire of Riches, Poverty. But then, even great *Croſſes are in Mercy*, 1. When God does not afflict us only, but teaches

teaches us at the ſame time. And 2. When we can be thankful for that Comfort which we have loſt, that is, if it be outward; for I ſee not how any perſon can be thankful for Deſertion while it remains upon him; for that were to thank God that he is departed, or that he has reſtrained the manifeſtations of his Love; which no man is obliged to do. 3. When all our Loſſes are made up in God, and in the Graces of his Spirit.

CHAP. XI.

Shewing, That preſent Diſtreſs of Conſcience is no ſign of Reprobation. There may be too great Trouble for Sin: And when it is exceſſive, former Experiences may be helpful to Afflicted People. And that God will not judge Perſons that have been good, according to what they are in the woful Diſeaſe of Melancholly.

XI. JUdge not of your Eternal State, by what you now feel; you may by the Terrors of the Lord, be in Anguiſh and Tribulation, in the very Suburbs of Hell, and yet never go thither: God may be diſpleaſed, and yet after a moments ſorrow you may find him to be your Gracious and your Everlaſting Friend: You are now, it may be, thrown down; but his hand and

and his promiſe can quickly raiſe you up again. You may conclude your ſelves, through the Power of your diſmal thoughts, to be Reprobates; and yet God may bring you to Salvation at the laſt: You may for many years lye in terror, but you cannot, you ought not to ſay that it will be ſo for ever. I my ſelf have been ſo afflicted, in ſo great Anguiſh and Perplexity, under ſuch dreadful apprehenſions of the Wrath of God, and of his Power and Greatneſs, as I thought, employed againſt me, that I thought my ſelf in Hell; knowing that it is not ſo much a Place, as a State. I thought that my Soul would be gathered with Sinners, and that I ſhould be found at the left hand of Chriſt. I thought I was cut down for ever; baniſhed from the Courts, and from the Preſence of the Lord, and ſhould never ſee Light, nor Comfort, nor Refreſhment any more; and yet through the Grace of God you ſee I am revived, and am not now without hope, as I once was; and from the very Gates of Death, from the very door of Deſtruction, I come to tell you, That tho God be Juſt, yet he is alſo Gracious. *There is mercy with him that he may be feared*; and that as the Night comes, ſo will the Morning too; for tho we have provoked him, which was our Folly, yet he will not contend for ever, which is our Comfort. *Pſal.* 31. 21, 22, 23, 24. *Bleſſed be the Lord, for he hath ſhewed me his marvellous loving-kindneſs*, &c. *For I ſaid in my haſte, I am cut off from before thine eyes; nevertheleſs thou heardeſt the voice of my Supplications, when I cried unto thee. O love the Lord all ye his ſaints, — Be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen*

ſtrengthen your hearts, all ye that hope in the Lord. When we are in deep and ſore Affliction, that ſmarts, and makes us groan, 'tis hard indeed to believe, that what makes us ſo ſick, will promote our health; or what breaks us to pieces, will joint our bones again: But our ſenſe and preſent feeling is not to guide our thoughts: We feel our ſelves indeed miſerable, but we ought to believe that our preſent Miſery may promote our Happineſs, tho by ways that we do not for the preſent ſee; we are not to judge of God by the Darkneſs of his Providences, but by the Light of his Word; not by his afflicting Strokes only, but by his Promiſe; which obliges him to correct us for our Sin, but yet not altogether to deſtroy us.

XII. Remember that it is an evil thing to be over-much troubled, even for Sin it ſelf; tho this advice does not concern the greateſt part of men; the moſt are ſecure; they break the Laws of God, and do not tremble; they pollute themſelves with manifold abominations, and are not aſhamed; they ſin with lofty looks, and with hardned hearts; and do evil with both hands earneſtly: They take the Name of God in vain; they profane his Sabbaths, they ſlight his Word, they defy his Threats, they ſcorn his Meſſengers, and yet few or none ſtrikes upon his Thigh, and ſays, *What have I done?* They are daring, where they ought to fear; and rejoice, where they ought to mourn: The greateſt part of the world are in a deep ſlumber, in miſery and in danger; but they are inſenſible, they know not that the end of theſe

theſe things will be very bitter and vexatious. But I now ſpeak to ſuch whoſe Conſciences are awakened with a ſenſe of the Greatneſs, the Majeſty, the Juſtice of God, and the Strictneſs and Holineſs of his Law, and have at the ſame time a deep ſenſe of their own Gulit, and liableneſs to Condemnation; their thoughts in ſuch troubles are too much apt to ſink, and to be over-whelmed; and indeed the view of all their ſins ſet in order before them, is too terrible for them to look upon. The burden and the weight of them is too heavy for any mortal men to bear: But they ſhould conſider, That God is not only ſevere, but very good; that he is not only angry, but reconcilable and willing to be at Peace again: This will repreſent his love to us and it is that, and that alone that will melt our Hearts with a kindly grief, and keep our ſorrow from overflowing the due bounds, as it is very prone to do. And it does ſo in ſeveral Caſes:

1: When our ſorrow for ſin hinders our regular proceeding in the true judgments of things. We know, that in dark and cloudy ſeaſons we cannot diſtinctly perceive the ſeveral Objects that we clearly diſcern in fair weather; ſo when our ſorrows have raiſed a miſt before our eyes, we dim our reaſon, and weaken our faculties, and ſee not things as they really are, but as they do appear, in a dark and confuſed manner: When we are not able to apprehend things as they are in themſelves, but as our Afflictions repreſent them; that is a falſe

falſe Medium whereby to form our Judgments, when they do make us heighten our troubles, and it may be, make them greater than they really are; and when they make us altogether inattentive to thoſe directions, methods, and advices that are ſuggeſted for our help.

2. When our ſorrow for ſin drives us away from God, the ſight of our Wounds ſhould make us haſte to the Great Phyſician for a ſpeedy relief. When I have throughly beheld my ſin, the next thought ſhould be, Oh what need have I of a God to forgive me, of a Saviour to plead my Cauſe, and of the Holy Spirit to renew me! and to throw my ſelf at his feet, whom I have provoked, in the ſubmiſſive terms of the poor Prodigal, ſaying, *Father, I have ſinned againſt heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy ſon.* And not becauſe I have once wandred, ſtill to wander in a ſtrange Countrey, far from my proper home. Our grief for ſin is too great, when it cauſes us totally to deſpair, to give our ſelves over, as hopeleſs and loſt for ever: This we never ought to do; we weep too much when we cannot ſee the Goodneſs and the Mercy of God, as well as his Juſtice and Severity. When we think that it is good to him that he ſhould oppreſs and cruſh the works of his own hands; and when we judge him to be Tyrannical and Cruel, as if he intended nothing but our Ruin; and when we peremptorily ſay, that he will not hear our Prayers, nor ſhew us any Favour: When we have no ſuitable thoughts of his Amiable Nature, his Covenant, and

and his Promiſe: When by the Painfulneſs of the Rod, we call in queſtion all that he has ever done for us; and when becauſe he frowns, we ſay he has thrown us off: When becauſe he delays his help, we ſay that he *will be gracious and favourable no more for ever*: When we charge him fooliſhly, and either deny his Providence, or blame his Conduct, becauſe he uſes not ſo gentle a method towards us, as we would have him to take; or when from our diſtreſs we make deſperate Concluſions of him, or of our ſelves: And moſt of all, when ſeeing that others whom we reckon as great ſinners as our ſelves, to be in health and peace, whilſt we groan and languiſh, we are apt to ſay, *Pſal.* 73 11. *We have cleanſed our hearts in vain.* That it is a vain thing to be Religious; to fear ſuch a God, who ſuffers his Servants to be ſo very much afflicted, and with ſuch ſort of ſorrows that are more ſpiritual, and conſequently more bitter than the reſt of the world is acquainted withal.

3. We are then too much troubled for our ſins when that trouble does not only indiſpoſe us for duty; for if it be attended with pain and trouble, it will be apt ſo to do; but when it makes us altogether to omit our duty that we owe to God; when our ſorrows damp our affections, which are the wings of our ſouls, to carry us up to God: When it cauſes us to mind nothing elſe but what is ſad and grievous: When our ſorrow ſwells to ſo great a height, that it covers with its imperious Waves, all the foun-

foundations and grounds of Peace and Comfort; it was not ſo, as ſome have obſerved, with our Bleſſed Lord; for when he was upon the Croſs, he was in extreme, in a mighty pain, and violent agonies; and yet did not theſe take away from him his care for his Mother: So the Good Thief in the midſt of his pangs, laboured to gain his fellow, and to ſave his own ſoul, and to glorify Chriſt. Theſe were indeed extraordinary inſtances; for our ſickneſs may be ſuch, that all that we can perform to God, is a quiet ſubmiſſion to his will, and a deſire of the Prayers of others; thus our ſorrows for ſin are exceſſive, when they make us to give over Prayer, or Hearing, or the like Duties; when they unſtring our Harps, and dull our Praiſes, and make us unfit for our Calling.

4. When our ſorrow puts us upon indirect means for relief; when we put that truſt in men that ſhould be placed in God; when we expect that Cure from them, which he alone is able to give; when we ſeek it in vain Company, in Recreations, or the things of this World; but if our ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure be very great, we ſoon know that all theſe things are of no value.

XIII. Call to mind thoſe experiences that you have heretofore had of the goodneſs of God; remember the years of the right hand of the moſt High; you are now fearing his Wrath; But can you not remember the time, when his Love was your dayly ſolace and delight? You

are now complaining, that he does not hear your cry; But how many Prayers has he ſent back with a gracious anſwer? How many times have you laid at his feet, in humiliation and tears, and his hand has wiped your tears away? How many times, when you have been fainting, has his Word revived your poor troubled ſouls? And tho' his Word be now bitter to your taſte, and fill you with Gall and Wormwood, yet it is ſtill able to revive you. Thoſe places of Scripture that heretofore revived you, are ſtill able to refreſh you; thoſe breaſts are ſtill as full of conſolation as they ever were; but only you are for the preſent under a decay of ſpirits, and have loſt your appetite, that you cannot draw that conſolation thence as you uſed to do. Do not forget the many Mercies of your Infancy, your Childhood, your Youth, and your Riper Age; how ſeaſonable, how unexpected, how neceſſary have your Mercies been, both for your bodies and your ſouls; and tho' I know it is your abuſe of them that grieves and troubles you, yet remember that he that once forgave you, can forgive you ſtill; and that he that did you once ſo much good, is ſtill able to do you good. *Judg.* 13. 23. If the Lord had meant to deſtroy us, he would not have received a ſacrifice at our hands, nor have done all this for us. Shall we diſtruſt, ſhall we forſake, ſhall we limit a God that has been heretofore ſo very mericful and ſo gracious? And tho it is very true, that it is no comfort to a poor man to think that he was once rich; or to a ſick man, to think that he was once in health;

for

for the bitterneſs of his preſent evils takes away the reliſh of his former comforts; and when a Man has loſt God in his terrible apprehenſions, it makes it to be more intollerable than if he had never enjoyed him: yet the having once had Communion with him by his Grace, and by his Spirit, may give us ſome reaſon to hope that the root of the matter is in us, and that God will cauſe it to bud and ſpring forth again, tho' it now lye under water, and be covered with many ſtorms and tribulations: And I may add alſo, with many ſins and corruptions with which we were not troubled before.

XIV. Remember that *God will not judge you according to what you are in ſuch a woful diſtemper as that of Melancholly*; but it will go with you as you were in the time of your health: This is highly neceſſary to be conſidered; for many good people, when they are under the diſeaſe of Melancholly, which can no more be prevented, than a Conſumption or a Fever; they are very apt to expreſs themſelves after this or the like manner: I thought I had once been ſerious, but now I ſee, that all was a deceit; I ſee that I heard, and prayed, and received the Sacrament in vain; for had I been a true Believer, this would never have befallen me. This is a very falſe way of arguing,; for if you had been never ſo ſincere, that ſincerity would not have kept away diſeaſes, nor this in particular; for in *Melancholly* we think and we ſpeak according to our preſent apprehenſions and our fears, and

theſe are greatly cauſed by the diſorder of our Imaginations, which is owing to the confuſion and the hurry of our thoughts, and that confuſion is the product of a great and unuſual ſtagnation or fixing of the Spirits, when the blood is corrupted, and the body indiſpoſed; and this moſt frequently, *occaſioned by the want of reſt or ſleep.* And 'tis commonly ſaid by others that know not what Melancholly is, Why do you think and pore ſo much? Divert your ſelves, think of ſomething elſe: But it is no more poſſible for people, where this diſeaſe comes with violence, to divert their thoughts, than 'tis poſſible for a Man to be wakeful in an Apoplexy, and calm in a raging Fever; no more than a Man that has a broken Arm or Leg, can walk and act as he uſed to do before. And indeed * rational and ſpiritual methods will not ſuffice for the cure of this; for you may as well expect that a good Sermon or comfortable words ſhould cure the Falling-ſickneſs, or Palſie, or a broken Head, only becauſe this diſeaſe works on the ſpirits and phantaſie, on which words of advice do alſo work; therefore ſuch Words, and Scripture, and Reaſon, may ſomewhat reſiſt it, or may palliate, or allay ſome of the effects at preſent; but as ſoon as time hath worn off the force and effects of theſe Reaſons, the diſtemper preſently returns; and 'tis as natural for a Melancholly perſon to fear, and to meditate terror, as 'tis for a ſick Man to groan, or for one in health to breathe: 'tis certain, that tenacious, obſtinate diſtempers, ſuch as this of Melancholly, will not be

* Mr. *Baxter's* 32. Dir. p. 6.

be relieved by meer words or ſentences; they cannot indeed caſt out their troubled thoughts; they cannot turn away their minds; they can think of nothing but what they do think of, no more than a Man in the Tooth-ach can forbear to think of his pain; and not ſo to think, is to be cured, which they would be glad to be: And tho' others urge us to rule our thoughts, it gives us no relief, but only adds to our miſery, to be frequently urged to that which we cannot do. But my advice to ſuch is, That in the uſe of ſuch things as they find to yield a natural refreſhment to their ſpirits, they would look up to God, who can make the Winds and Storms to ceaſe, and make that unquiet agitation that is in the Blood and Humours, to be ſtill again; and when he ſhall be pleaſed to give you the reſt of night, and the clearneſs and activity of your natural ſpirits, then your troubleſome and uneaſie thoughts, by the help they will then receive by reading or advice, will wear away. I ſpeak nothing but what I my ſelf have experienced to be true; for this Diſeaſe does magnify our ſorrows: What I aim at is this, That when any are in deep Melancholly, ſo far as they have any Reaſon left, they ſhould not encreaſe their own terror, by thinking that all their former Prayers and endeavours have been to no purpoſe, becauſe they do not then perceive what effect they have had. God is certainly more gracious than to reckon the unavoidable attendants of a *diſeaſe*, *that none can cure but himſelf*, to be a ſin; Men are not to be judged by what ſtrange actions or expreſſions they

are guilty of in a violent ſickneſs; and among all that are ſo, I think this to be moſt violent.

CHAP. XII.

Of the ſeveral ends that God hath in ſuffering his Servants to be under long Afflictions, and ſpiritual diſtreſs and anguiſh.

XV. COnſider what ends God may have in letting the apprehenſions of his wrath continue for a ſeaſon; and here I know I enter upon a thing, whereof we cannot have a certain and a comprehenſive knowledg; for the Judgments of God, and great, and long, and ſevere Tryals, are too deep for us eaſily to fathom, or to tell particularly what is God's deſign in this or that: The *Arcana's* of his Government are not obvious to every one that deſires to pry into them; and there are abundance of very dark and myſterious Providences in this World, the Reaſons of which we ſhall never know till the great day. Who can tell the very Cauſe, why God ſuffers one Religious Man to ſuffer affliction for ſeveral years, and another that is perhaps no better than he, ſcarcely knows what affliction means? One ſhall be croſſed and diſappointed in all that he goes about, and meet with loſſes in his Eſtate and in his Family, and be damaged in his Health; when another proſpers,

ſpers, and is well, and dies by an eaſie death? in what a ſmooth path do ſome good people go into Heaven, when others are torn with thorns and bryars, and go mourning and weeping all the way! Who dare preſume to ſay why this is ſo, and no otherwiſe! A great modeſty becomes our inquiries, when we endeavour to pierce into the Deſigns of the Great God, whoſe Throne is eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſs, but ſurrounded with clouds and darkneſs. *It is the glory of God to conceal a thing*, *Prov.* 25. 2. his Infinite Majeſty will not be accountable to us for what he does: there is a thick veil upon the Reaſons of his Judgments and Decrees, that he may procure a greater veneration from his Creatures; *Pſal.* 77. 19. *Thy way is in the ſea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footſteps are not known.* Therefore when we ſay, that God does this or that for ſuch or ſuch a reaſon, we muſt do it with great humility, and only ſo far as the Scripture is our guide; and from that we may learn that God ſuffers his people to be under the apprehenſions of his wrath, and under long afflictions for ſuch ends as theſe,

1. It is certainly good for the Univerſe, for God does nothing in vain; and when any part ſuffers, 'tis for the good of the whole; tho perhaps we cannot diſcern how it is ſo, till his hand has finiſhed his own entire deſign.

2. That others may be convinced by their very Senſes, what a dreadful God he is; and how terrible a thing it is to ſin: *When the Lyon roars, who will not fear?* Amos 3. 8. When men

ſee thoſe that were once pleaſant as themſelves, ſhedding tears, and crying out in the bitterneſs of their ſouls, that they are undone and miſerable; their ſad looks, and their doleful expreſſions bear witneſs to the Being, and to the Severity and Juſtice of God: He ſometimes in the extraordinary joys which his love produces in the hearts of his people, ſhews Heaven upon Earth; and ſometimes in the fears and amazements and terrors of awakened Conſciences, he ſhews Hell upon Earth, and both by his wiſe and holy Providence are deſigned for the good of others. The language of their groans does thus beſpeak all that behold their ſorrow: Oh ſin not againſt ſo great and ſo terrible a God; leſt the flames begin to ſcorch you, that have almoſt conſumed us; we no more thought of falling into his hands, than you do: we thought no more than you, that our ſinning would coſt us ſo very dear; but you ſee what we have felt, and what you may expect if you do not repent and turn, and make your peace with ſo holy a God as he is; his Power will amaze you, his Arm will cruſh you if ever you provoke him to ſend on you ſuch a ſtroke as ours is; endeavour therefore to profit by ſuch ſorrowful Examples.

3. God does it to keep us from carnal Security all our lives; *Pſal. 9. 20. Put them in fear, O Lord, that the nations may know themſelves to be but men.* When our ſin has fallen upon us like a Giant newly refreſht with wine; ſurely the remembrance of that horror, pain and ſmart, will keep us that we ſhall not dare to ſleep in

ſin,

ſin, nor be unwatchful and preſumptuous any more for ever. Surely this will quench all irregular deſires, and cauſe us only to deſire *that* God, whoſe favour we need ſo very much; this has ſurely ſhewn us how great is our weakneſs and our folly, and how low we ſink when he hath left us: this will make us to be humble, and to *walk ſoftly* all our days; remembring we are not every hour more than what God makes us to be; if he leaves us but for one poor moment, where are we? We that have taſted ſo much of his diſpleaſure, have cauſe to rejoice with trembling; every remembrance of that doleful time muſt be to us as a new motive to obedience, and a powerful reſtraint of ſin; *Heb.* 12. 10. *He chaſtens us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holineſs.* Oh what an abundance of folly muſt there have been lodged in our hearts, that God is forced to uſe ſo ſharp and ſo ſevere a method to whip it out! how benummed were we, that nothing elſe could awaken us! how diſeaſed, that nothing but a potion ſo bittter could promote our Cure! how great was our pride, that he was forced to beat it down by ſo violent a ſtroke! *Deut.* 8. 15, 16. *Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderneſs, wherein were fiery ſerpents, and ſcorpions, and drought, where there was no water; That he might humble thee, and prove thee, to do thee good in thy latter end.* So *Paul* had, 2 *Cor.* 12. 7. *a thorn in the fleſh.*

3. To convince us of his own All-ſufficiency, and the nothingneſs of our ſelves, and of all other Creatures. He let us fall, to ſhew us how

ſmall

ſmall our ſtrength is; and that if we would have our goings eſtabliſhed, we muſt depend on him alone. We are in our proſperity apt to think, that this or that Creature, this or that Perſon will yield us relief; but in ſpiritual Troubles God ſhews us, that *all men, even the beſt of men are vanity*; and thoſe from whom we expect the greateſt help, do us the leaſt good: Nay, thoſe Watchmen, of whoſe skill and kindneſs we have the greateſt opinion, are frequently ſuffered to ſmite us by their imprudent, or by their harſh Speeches and Cenſures, that ſo we may not look to thoſe Ciſterns which we find to be broken ones, but to that Heaven whence all our Conſolation flows. When we go to the Creatures with the moſt raiſed expectations, we meet with the moſt unlookt-for diſappointment: And indeed whilſt we look only to them, we are like people that go begging to the doors of the poor. Our Fellow-creatures are all *Eleemoſynary*, and have nothing but what they receive; and unleſs God helps us, they cannot help; as unleſs the wind blows, not all the skill of the Pilot, nor all the induſtry of the Mariner can make the Ship to ſail forward to the Port. We think indeed, that if our Friend be ſick, we would haſten to his help, and immediately relieve him; but our beſt Friend ſtays a long while ere he delivers; not from any pleaſure that he takes in our ſorrows, but that he may render his Power and his Wiſdom more illuſtrious: as Chriſt, *John* 12. 6, 7. when he heard that *Lazarus* was ſick, ſtayed two days in the place where he was, that ſo the glory of God might be more conſpicuous

cuous in his Reſurrection: And when the ſeaſon that is moſt beautiful comes, we ſhall diſcern the reaſon of his delay: He lets us fall low to a wonder, that he may diſplay his Power, that is Almighty; and his Wiſdom, that is never at a loſs; that we may know, when all other methods have been tried in vain, 'tis he alone that can make our *broken bones to rejoice:* that when we are beſet with difficulties which we think inſuperable, we may ſtand ſtill, and ſee how glorious, how ſuitable, and how ſpeedy is the Salvation, and the Grace, and the Help of God; and that he alone is the God of Comfort, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3. That all other things are inconſiderable, but that he is Alſufficient; and it is an excellent Leſſon that he teaches us by our moſt heavy Croſſes: None can calm the tumults and uneaſineſs of a troubled Soul, but he alone; our Spirits are ſo remote from humane Obſervations, our Diſeaſes are ſo inward, and ſo great, that men cannot reach them; but nothing is too hard for him that is the Father of Spirits; and he calls us peculiarly to regard this his mighty Work; *Iſa.* 57. v. 17. *For the iniquity of his covetouſneſs was I wroth, and ſmote him. I hid me, and was wroth, and he went on frowardly in the way of his heart. I have ſeen his ways, and will heal him; I will lead him alſo, and reſtore comforts to him, and to his mourners. I create the fruit of the lips; peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, ſaith the Lord, and I will heal him.* He creates it; he not only brings peace, but brings it from nothing by his all-powerful efficacy, that nothing can reſiſt —— I ſay again, this I believe is *one*

of

of the principal leſſons that God deſigns to teach us by our inward and ſpiritual troubles, even, that in him alone our help lies, and that all, even the beſt of men, are vanity: we muſt not look for much from them, for if we do ſo, we ſhall moſt ſurely be diſappointed: they have either not patience to hear our Complaints, and to underſtand the particularities of our Caſe; or if any one have ſo great patience, and ſo much tenderneſs, as to hear our ſad ſtory, they will, it may be, ſigh, or ſhake their heads at it, but alas they can give us no relief.

4. Another End that God may have in the continuance of long and ſore afflictions, and great inward troubles, is, to diſcover more clearly to us the corruption and defilement of our nature: In a calm, the waters of the Sea appear to be clear enough; but when the ſtorm comes, then it throws up the mire and dirt; in proſperity and health we think we have very good hearts, and conſiderable degrees of ſanctification; but when ſin is ſet home upon us, the ſpiritual Law of God begins to ſhew its purity. Oh what multitudes of iniquities do then appear! what unbelief, what impatience, what murmuring, what unbecoming thoughts of God, ſuch hideous and ſtrange thoughts as we never had before! In health, and ſtrength, and peace, there are a thouſand ſecular Affairs and Contrivances that take up our time, and divert our minds, and turn us to the view of things without; but in the trouble of our Conſciences our eyes are turned another way, to behold with attention our own Souls, and to ſee what luſts, what

what impurities, what venomous Creatures, what Vipers have been entertained there; and oh what a ghaſtly formidable ſight is this, to ſee ſuch a numerous brood of Tranſgreſſions, when we imagined that all had been very well with us! it is even a wonder, that God who ſaw ſo much evil in us, ſhould let us alone ſo long. Theſe ſpiritual Afflictions ſhew us what a ſorry contemptible Creature man is; what cauſe he has to be debaſed when he is moſt proud; and what cauſe he has to be covered with ſhame and bluſhing, when he is moſt fearleſs and undaunted: when God does not blow upon our Garden inſtead of thoſe Spices, thoſe Graces, blowing forth, that may be for his glory, and for our comfort, there is nothing but Weeds and Thiſtles, nothing but Thorns and Briars that tear and wound us; our Soul is then juſt like a dead Carkaſs full of putrefaction; no ſprightly motions towards Heaven, no ſpiritual, no warm deſires, like the cold Regions of the *North*, which the Sun does only viſit with his fainter and weaker beams; and not like thoſe *Eaſtern* Countries, where his greater heat does produce Spices and fragrant Flowers.

5. Another End that God hath in the continuance of Spiritual Troubles and Afflictions, and the Senſe of his Wrath long upon us, is, that from our own Experience Chriſt may be for ever very precious to us; when we are at eaſe, and think our ſelves whole, we ſeldom think of him; but our pain, and our ſmart, our guilt and our fears; the ſight of our preſent Danger, and of approaching Wrath, cauſes us

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to run to this Phyſician, and to beg his help when we are ſinking; it will make us to ſtretch out our hands, and ſay, *Maſter ſave us, or elſe we periſh.* Never did a poor Man with more earneſtneſs beg an Alms, than we ſhall beg his help; never did a diſeaſed Perſon after violent racking Pain more long for Reſt, and a Cure, than we ſhall for Chriſt; and having fallen among Lyons, having been the ſlaves of fear, and held in Captivity by the Temptations of Satan, we ſhall moſt gladly ſhake of our Chains, and embrace Liberty and Salvation when our Lord comes to ſet us free? The ſight of him to be our Saviour, will make us run to meet him, and to ſay, Welcome, thou only Friend of our Souls; welcome, thou dear Phyſician and Healer of our Souls. *Hoſannah to the Son of David, bleſſed is he that comes to us in the name of the Lord.* Oh! how will our very hearts melt with love, when we remember that as we have been diſtreſſed for our Sins againſt him; ſo he was in greater Agonies for us! We have had Gall and Wormwood, but he taſted a more bitter Cup. The Anger of God has dried up our Spirits, but he was ſcorched with a more flaming Wrath. He was under violent pain in the Garden, and on the Croſs; ineffable was the ſorrow that he felt, being forſaken of his Father, deſerted by his Diſciples, affronted and reproached by his Enemies, and under a Curſe for us. This Sun was under a doleful Eclipſe, this Living Lord was pleaſed to dye, and in his Death was under the Frowns of an Angry God. That Face was then hid from him, that had always

ways ſmiled before; and his Soul felt that horror, and that darkneſs, which it had never felt before. So, that tho there was no Separation between the divine and humane Nature, yet he ſuffered Pains equal to thoſe which we had deſerv'd to ſuffer in Hell for ever. God ſo ſuſpended the Efficacies of his Grace, that it diſplayed in that hour none of its force and virtue on him. He had no Comfort from Heaven, none from his Angels, none from his Friends, even in that ſorrowful hour, when he needed comfort moſt. Like a Lyon that is hurt in the Foreſt, ſo he roared and cryed out, tho there was no deſpair in him; and when he was forſaken, yet there was truſt and hope in thoſe words, *My God*, *My God*. Have we been abandoned of God? He was much more ſo, and was deſerted for a while, that we might not be ſo for ever. Oh! how frequently ſhould we remember ſuch a Saviour? How delightful ſhould we think and ſpeak of him, who thought nothing too much for us? We have by feeling of the Wrath of God, drank, in ſome meaſure, of the Cup whereof he drank. We juſtly for our Sins, He out of Love and Kindneſs, that he might make an Atonement and a Propitiation; and if what we have felt was ſo terrible, how much more dreadful was that which he endured? If the ſmaller drops that have put our Souls into a flame, have filled us with anguiſh, what torment did he undergo that was plunged, as into a Sea of Wrath? Surely ſuch a Friend, ſuch a Phyſician as he has been to us, muſt be ever valued. We cannot pray, but in his Name; we

we cannot be juſtified, but with his Righteouſneſs; we can hope for nothing, but by his Merits, and his Interceſſion; we cannot Live, we cannot dye without him. Let this be the conſtant Language of our Souls, *None but Chriſt, none but Chriſt*, Cant. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4.

6. That we may put an high Value on the Scripture, that we may ſearch, and look into it with more earneſtneſs and frequency, to ſee if there be any Promiſes in it that are reviving; any place in it that may afford hope and comfort to Souls ſo miſerable, and ſo guilty. For when our Conſciences are awakened, and pierced with the ſenſe of Wrath from God; if his Word would ſpeak peace to us, we could have eaſe; but the terrible threatnings thereof are the things that wound us deep, and that put us to the greater ſmart, and we then know and fully believe beyond all doubt, that this is the word by which we are to be tried in the great and ſolemn day.

7. Another end of God in continuing Afflictions, and a long remaining ſenſe of his Wrath upon us, is, That we may be everlaſting admirers of the freeneſs of his Grace, when we are delivered. Oh! with what wonder ſhould we behold his Condeſcention, and his care of us, that when our wounds were very deep, he poured in Wine and Oyl; when we were inwardly bleeding, and no Creature, no Friend on Earth could help us, he did not ſuffer us to bleed to death. Whatever gifts we have, whatſoever advantage above ſome others

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in knowledg and in underſtanding, whatſoever Opportunities we have of doing good, and whatever Zeal we uſe in doing what that opportunity offers to us, we ought to ſay with *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace which was beſtowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.* The Hand of God is ſo ſtrong, his Wiſdom is ſo admirable, that he turns to our profit and advantage, not only the Evils which are cauſed by croſs Events, or by the World, but thoſe which we commit our ſelves, that ſeem to be contrary to our Salvation, even thoſe ſins which we are guilty of: He changes theſe Poiſons into Phyſick, theſe Scandals into Edification; and from the thickeſt darkneſs he does bring our light. As by the Adultery, and the Murther of *David*, he opened the eyes of his Servant to conſider the horror of his fault; and that which was like to have thruſt him into perdition, by the Divine Providence confirmed him in the way of Salvation. By his Fall he was made to know how feeble his nature was; and on the other ſide, how admirable was the Grace of God; this obliged him to quit all high opinion of himſelf, and not to ſeek his happineſs any-where elſe than in the mercy and grace of God: And as to other faithful Perſons, this ſorrowful example of his was beneficial to mortify their Vanity, and their Pride, and to teach them to put all their truſt in God. With what wonder ſhould we daily cry out, *Will God indeed dwell familiarly with men?* Will

Daillé Melange, part 2. p. 415.

he pity, will he pardon such impatient, such murmuring, such unbelieving Sinners as we have been? Will he cause us to hear the joyful Voice again, who have so long had the Voice of Ruine and Destruction in our Ears? Will he return and be my God again, when I have so often thought that he was my Enemy? Will he give me the hope of Heaven, when I have been so long at the very door of Hell? Will he put out his hand, and take me into his Ark, when my poor uneasie Soul hath been wandring to and fro seeking for rest, and found none? His end in these Afflictions, and sore Tryals, is, That the delivered Christian may be always employed in wondring at his Love; and when he has lost himself in wondring transporting Joy, may say, *Oh the height, and breadth, and depth!* &c. *Rom.* 11. 33. What, will he be so gracious to me, who have had such hard thoughts of him? Will he embrace me, such a Prodigal as I am, in his Arms? Oh why should he let me live, when others that have been less Sinners than I, are dead and perished? Why should he be kind to me, when I was so undutiful to him? What, will he give me leave to pray yet again to him, when I in my unbelief so often said it was in vain to pray? Will he suffer me that have spoken so unadvisedly with my lips, that have darkened Counsel by words without knowledge, *Job* 38. 2. to take his name in my mouth? Will he suffer a mortal Man, and a vile Sinner, to say, My Lord, and my God? Yes, he will! I see, I feel that there is with him plenteous Redemption; and must for ever admire the riches, and the

the freeneſs of his Grace. Let others talk of merit, of the power of their own Will, of the light of their own Underſtandings, of the force and ſtrength of their Reaſon, for me I know that I have none of theſe things whereof to boaſt. I was laid low in the very depths of miſery and deſolation, and there had I lain ſtill for all that I was able to do. I was hopeleſs, and he filled my deſpairing Soul with hope. I was very guilty, and he forgave me: I was near to Hell; I ſaw the flames and ſmoak of that Infernal pit; I ſmelled the Fire and Brimſtone; and he that alone could help me, brought me back again. I was fainting, and he revived me; dying, and he made me live: How many hath he paſſed by, and ſuffered them to pine away in their Iniquities; and he has ſaid unto me, Live! If he will accept of my poor prayers, my weak endeavours, of my heart, and of my Soul; my thoughts, my affections, ſhall be all employed for him, and for his glory: when I have ſo long heard the rumour, and the noiſe of war, he hath ſent me the tidings of peace and joy. Oh whence is it, but from his own Grace, that I, who was ſo far from him, ſhould be brought nigh; that I who hated him ſo much, ſhould be ſo greatly beloved! *Enter into thy Reſt, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*

VIII. Another end why God ſuffers his Servants ſo long to remain under the impreſſions of his Wrath, is, That they may learn to be merciful, and helpful to others.

1. To ſuch as are in the like caſe.

2. To ſuch as are ſinning, and have not yet felt the diſpleaſure of God for their Sins.

Firſt, To ſuch as are under trouble of Conſcience, and the apprehenſions of God's Wrath; 2 *Cor.* 1. 3, 4. *Luke* 22.32. As our heavenly Father has been merciful to us, ſo we muſt be merciful to them: and having met with a Fountain that has quencht our thirſt, lead them alſo to the Spring of Living Waters. Conceive thy ſelf like *Joſeph*, therefore ſent before, and ſold into the *Egypt* of a wounded Conſcience, where thy feet were hurt in the Stocks, and the Irons entred into thy Soul, that thou mighteſt provide food for the famine of others, and eſpecially be a Purveyor of Comfort to thoſe thy Brethren that ſhall follow thee down into the ſame doleful Condition. We muſt not grieve them by *ſharp, or unſeaſonable diſcourſe:* when they are in the Furnace, we muſt not by imprudent bitterneſs make it to be more hot: they are wounded in their Souls, and thoſe wounds require a gentle, a skilful, and a tender hand; every one of us ſhould ſay, they are troubled on every ſide, and ſo was I: they are afraid that God is departed, and ſo was I: thoſe Arrows of the Almighty that ſtick in them, but a little while ago ſtuck in me; that Cup that is now in their hand, was but a little while ago in mine; as they ſigh, and complain, and groan, and fear, even ſo did I: therefore let me viſit theſe Sick; direct theſe Wanderers that have loſt their way, and ſee if theſe Priſoners by the ſight of my Liberty, will become Priſoners of hope. I muſt lead them to my Phyſician, and tell them the nature of my cure: when others are

Dr. *Fuller's Cauſe and Cure of a Wounded Conſcience*, pag. 144.

are fallen into the Pit, out of which we are newly got, let us ſtrive to draw them up. Let us put on bowels of compaſſion; let us patiently hear what they ſay, and not rebuke them for complaining; let us not be weary of their diſcourſe, becauſe it's doleful and troubleſome; let us not ſmile at that which makes them weep; nor ſimply call that *fancy*, which is the *anguiſh and trouble of their Souls*. Let us remember all that ſpeech, and that uſage, that made us worſe when we were ill, and avoid all ſuch to them. Let us remember what it was that gave us ſome ſupport, and let us miniſter the ſame to them. When any of our Friends are very ſick, if we know any Cordial, any Receipt that has been beneficial to us under the like caſe, we make all the ſpeed we can to fetch it, and we cannot ſee them faint, without finding at the ſame time a very ſenſible commotion in our own hearts: no outward Affliction, though never ſo painful, is ſo terrible as theſe ſpiritual Troubles are; let us therefore be more affectionately concerned for ſuch diſtreſſed Perſons, than for any other, when we ſee the Anger of God beginning to kindle in their Conſciences: Let us uſe all the methods that are moſt like to quench the beginning flame. For as God commanded the *Iſraelites* to be kind to ſtrangers, becauſe they themſelves were ſuch in the Land of *Egypt*: So let us be very kind and pitiful to all that are in diſtreſs, we having been ſo our ſelves. Let us take all opportunities to viſit, to exhort, to direct them. Let us wraſtle with the God of *Jacob* in their behalf; let them ſee that we ſympathize moſt

heartily with them; and that though the Grace of God has wiped our tears away, yet we can ſtill weep with them that weep. Let us take all the ways we can to make them believe we are afflicted with their affliction, and ſincerely concerned for the ſadneſs of their Caſe; and by this means they will more ruminate on what we ſay, and regard the more what we tell them, that have been once as they now are; then they will regard others that may ſpeak well indeed, but not from their own Experience. If a man were in a bodily Diſeaſe, he would rather have recourſe to a Phyſician that had been himſelf lately cured of it, than to any other that can talk, it may be, more learnedly about it, but knows not by information or ſtudy half ſo much as he that feels it: the knowledge of the one is but ſpeculative, but the other's is more diſtinct and practical; and he knows how to make ſuitable applications to his Patient, from the remembrance of what he felt in his own Body; *Heb.* 2. 17, 18. 2 *Cor.* 1. 6.

Secondly, God continues the ſenſe of his wrath very long upon the Souls of his People, that they may learn to pity wicked men, and inſtruct them in the way of happineſs; *Pſal.* 51. 11, 12, 13. that they may teach them by their words, their ſerious Exhortations, and their faithful Reproofs, by their holy Converſation, and by their every action that they go about: there are many Leſſons that we our ſelves are not taught, but by the rod, and the frowns of an Angry God, by a very ſmarting and ſevere diſcipline; we ſee not, till after a long teaching, the

the real evil of Sin, and the true worth of Chriſt; to the knowledge of which, when we are once arrived, we muſt communicate ſome meaſures of it to others; though the miſery is, the moſt will ſcarce believe our Report, till they themſelves come to feel what we have felt. He that is eſcaped by the mercy of God out of long trouble of Conſcience, can thus ſay to Sinners; I have dearly paid for all the delight that I once had in ſin; for all my indifference and lukewarmneſs, my cold and ſluggiſh Prayers, my loſt and miſimproved time; beware that you do not provoke him, for he is a jealous God; for if you do, you ſhall alſo find, that thoſe Sins which you make a ſlight matter of, will tear you to pieces hereafter; you will find them when your Conſciences are awakened, to be an heavy, and intolerable burthen; they will preſs you down to Hell it ſelf. I could not have thought that the diſpleaſure of God had been a thing ſo bitter, and ſo very dreadful; *It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God, for he is a conſuming fire:* if his Anger be kindled but a little, you cannot then fix your minds upon any pleaſant Objects, nor have one eaſie Thought; you cannot then go about your buſineſs, your Trades, or your ſecular Affairs; for your Souls will be ſo much amazed, that you will be full of horror and conſternation. Thoſe of us that have *felt the terrors of the Lord*, do moſt earneſtly perſuade you to forſake every Sin; for if you indulge, and love your Iniquities, they will ſet you on fire round about: Oh that you did but know what you do, when you

ſin! you are oppoſing that Authority that will avenge it ſelf of all its obſtinate oppoſers; you are heaping up fuel for your own deſtruction; you are whetting that Sword that will enter into your Bowels; you are preparing your ſelves for bitterneſs and trouble; and though God is patient for a while, yet he will not always be ſo; the ſhadows of the night are drawing on, and the doleful time will come, when all your mirth will end in tears, and all your falſe confidence, and your fooliſh hopes, will expire and give up the Ghoſt. And which of you will live when God ſhall enter into Judgment with you? VVhat will you do? VVhere will you go for help, when he that is your Maker, he that has weighed your actions, and obſerved your wandrings, ſhall call you to give an account of all theſe things? If our bleſſed Lord, when he came near *Jeruſalem*, lift up his voice and wept, ſaying, *O that thou hadſt known, even now in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace*! What cauſe have we to mourn over our fellow-creatures whom we ſee to be in danger of miſery, and alas they know it not! Can we ſee them ſleeping on the very edge of ruine, and not be greatly troubled for them! Oh poor ſinners! you are now ſleeping, but *the Judge is at the door*; you are rolling the pleaſant morſel under your tongue, but it will be great vexation to you in the latter end. How can you reſt! how can you be quiet when you have none of your ſins pardoned! no comfortable relation to God! no well-grounded hope of Heaven! How can you with any aſſurance go about thoſe things that

that concern your buying, your ſelling, and the preſent Life, when your poor ſouls, that are of a thouſand times more value, are neglected all the while! We have felt great terrors, inexpreſſible ſorrows from an angry God, and we would fain perſuade you not to run upon the thick Boſſes of his Buckler, not to dare his Juſtice, not to deſpiſe his threats, as once it was our folly; but we knew not what we did. We are *come out of great Tribulation*, and a fiery Furnace, and we would fain perſuade you to avoid the like danger; let what we have felt be a caution to you. It was the deſire of *Dives* in his miſery, that he might leave it, to go thence to warn his Brethren, leſt they came to the ſame place of torment; but it would not be granted; ſome of us here come from the very Gates of Hell, to warn you that you may not go thither, nay, to warn you that you may never go ſo near it as we did; we wiſh you ſo well, that we would not have any of you to feel ſo much ſorrow and grief as we have felt. We were once aſleep as you are, we did not imagine that terror and deſolation was ſo near when it came upon us; and now having been overtaken with a ſtorm of wrath, we come to warn you, that we ſee the Clouds gather, that there is a ſound of much Rain, and of great Miſery, tho' your Eyes are ſo fixt on things below, that you ſee it not. You muſt ſpeedily ariſe, and ſeek for a ſhelter, as you tender the ſalvation of your ſouls; you muſt not put off ſerious thoughts for your own ſafety, not for one day, not for one hour longer, leſt it be too late.

late. We were travelling with as little thought of danger as ſome of you, and we fell among Thieves, they plundred us of our peace and our comfort, and we were even ready to dye, when that God, whoſe juſt diſpleaſure brought us low, was pleaſed to take pity of us, and to ſend his Son, as the kind *Samaritan*, to bind up our wounds, and to chear our hearts; and we cannot be ſo uncharitable as not to tell you, when we ſee you going the ſame way, that there are Robbers on the Road; and that if you do not either return, or change your courſe, you will ſmart for your ſecurity as much as we have done. We have been ſaved indeed at length from our fears, it is *as by fire:* But we ſuffered, while they remain'd, very great loſs. Some perhaps will be ſaying within himſelf, *I ſhall ſee no evil, tho' I walk in the imaginations of my own heart*; theſe things you talk off are the meer product of a *melancholly temper* that always preſages the worſt, that is always frighting it ſelf and otherswith black and formidable Idea's; and ſeeing I am no way inclinable to that diſtemper, I need not fear any ſuch perplexing thoughts: But *know*, that no briskneſs of temper, no ſanguine couragious hopes, no jollities, nor divertions, can fence you from the wrath of God. If you go on in ſin, you muſt feel the bitterneſs of it either in this or the next World; and that may, notwithſtanding all the ſtrength of your Conſtitution, all the pleaſures of your unfearing Youth, come upon a ſudden. That Cup that is full of ſparkling Wine, has Dregs and Poyſon at the bottom. Your ſouls

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are always naked and open before God, and he can make terrible impreſſions of wrath there when he will, notwithſtanding by your chearfulneſs and mirth, you ſeem to be at the greateſt diſtance from it.

CHAP. XIII.

Shewing what is the Duty of thoſe Perſons whom God hath delivered from Melancholly, and from the anguiſh of their Conſciences, under a ſenſe of his Wrath. As alſo, what a wonderful Act of Providence it is, that ſuffers a very ſinful World to be in ſo great Peace! and what cauſe there is for all people to pray againſt ſuch Diſeaſes, whereof the Devil ſerves himſelf to their great torment and vexation. And as the Concluſion of this Firſt Part, What is to be thought of thoſe that are diſtracted with trouble for their ſins; and of thoſe that dye in great darkneſs as to their ſpiritual ſtate.

I Should now proceed to ſhew how thoſe Perſons that have been long under a ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure, and who are now come to ſome *good hope through Grace*, ought to behave themſelves after ſo terrible a viſitation: But my Diſcourſes on the former Verſes of this *Pſalm*, and which I have publiſhed ſome time ago, where I mentioned what it is that we are to do after

after recovery from ſickneſs, hath in a great meaſure prevented my farther inſiſting on this Subject, as alſo thoſe ends that I have now mentioned, which God aims at in theſe diſpenſations; and if we make it our great care to comply with them, we anſwer his deſigns; and even thoſe ſore afflictions will be a very great mercy to us. And what I judge further neceſſary to be ſaid, I ſhall compriſe in theſe following particulars:

I. That we in all the following part of our Lives, value this World very little; our unmortified affections were the bryers and the thorns that pierced us, and multiplied our ſorrows. Let us look upon this World and it's moſt admired Glories, as a poor contemptible, empty thing; for ſo it is indeed: The World by the cares and variety of thoughts to which it naturally carries us, eaſily diſquiets and throws us down, but it cannot with all its charms raiſe us up again; all its Riches cannot buy an hours Peace and Comfort; all its Honours cannot ſave us from the Contempt of God; all its pleaſures cannot ſweeten our Cup, nor all its ſmiles chear us when he frowns: The more we are elevated above all earthly things, the more ſhall we be freed from ſtorm and tempeſt; and it may be true that ſome tell us, That the tops of thoſe Mountains that are above the middle Region, are ſo quiet, that the lighteſt things there, lye ſtill and are not moved: This World has been formerly, and will be ſtill a place of vanity and vexation of ſpirit; we have found it to be ſo; always have we met with trouble.

VVhen

When we loved any thing there with an exceſſive love, alas! it was able to do nothing for us in our ſore affliction; when our Conſciences were in a flame, there was nothing in it that could quench our thirſt; let us eſteem at a low rate ſuch an empty World as this, its Comforts are doubtful, but its Miſeries are certain; its Griefs are long-lived, but its pleaſures are very ſhort.

II. When the ſenſe of the wrath of God is removed, we muſt, by the remembrance of it, be fortified againſt the tentations of Satan; when we are tempted to diſtruſt, we muſt ſay, I will not entertain any more hard thoughts of a God whom I have found to be faithful; when we are tempted to impatience, under ſome new returning croſs, we muſt anſwer and ſay, I will not fret nor murmur any more againſt my Gracious and my Loving God, that will, I am ſure, remember me ſtill in my low eſtate, as he did heretofore; when Satan would perſuade us that we are no Sons of God, becauſe we are afflicted, or becauſe we are long ſo, we muſt quench this dart alſo, by remembring our dear Redeemer, who was never more beloved, than when he was moſt ſorely tried: There is nothing that will ſo preſerve us, as the remembrance of the kindneſs and the mercy of God: *His peace that paſſes underſtanding will keep our hearts.*

III. Let our eſcape from ſuch long and ſore afflictions, quicken us to Duty: I do not mean by that, only to Prayer, but the performance of all thoſe Acts of Religion, whereby we may glorify

glorify God, and do good to Men. Let our Prayers be more fervent, our Meditations of him more ſweet; and our Thoughts of him more conſtant and abiding. Let us take heed of all formality and unaffectedneſs of ſpirit in all our attendance upon God; Let us beware of inward and ſpiritual decays, and ſtifle and reſiſt the firſt abatements and declinings of our love to God, ſeeing he has withdrawn his hand from us, and his dread does not make us afraid, *Job* 9.13,14. Let us draw near to him, and ſeek his face, and do it now with more delight; for as the Earth (as one obſerves) is ſhut and bound up by froſt and cold, and putteth not forth her fruits till the warmth and heat of the Summer call them out; ſo the heart, under the cold affections of fear and guilt, under the dark apprehenſions of wrath and judgement, is ſo contracted, that it knows not how to draw near to God; but when his love is ſhed abroad in it, then it is enlarged to the performance of its duty; and the ſenſe of mercy, and the hope of it, gives us great encouragement to pray; for *Prayer is the child of Faith.* Let the Love of God towards us, quicken us to watchfulneſs, and a dayly care of our own hearts that are ſo treacherous and deceitful. It once was night, a doleful night with us; but ſeeing the day is begun to dawn, let us ſet upon our work with a greater diligence.

IV. Our deliverance from ſuch ſad and terrible Apprehenſions of God's Wrath, and from long and ſore Tryals, ſhould teach us to walk humbly with him. We have ſeen him in the

the terribleneſs of his Majeſty; we have ſeen the Lord of Hoſts in his Glory, and ſuch a ſight cannot but make us know, that we are unclean, *Iſaiah 6.* 5. What have we wherein to pride our ſelves? The Archers have ſorely ſhot at us, and we could not make our Bow abide in ſtrength; God has bruiſed, tried, and laid us low, to ſhew us what was in our Hearts; and alas, we ſaw nothing there, but what was very bad. Such a ſight as may cauſe us to wonder at his Patience, and his healing-grace, and to abhor and loath our ſelves for ever. The time of our darkneſs, was a time of Provocation; when we were in the Wilderneſs, we murmured; and what a Mercy is it, that our Carkaſſes are not fallen, and our Souls ruined; but that the God whom we ſo provoked, hath given us the proſpect, and the hope of *Canaan* after all this! Thoſe that ſhould have told us, when we were in Health and Peace, that we ſhould have ſpoke ſo hardly of God when we were in our diſtreſs, that we ſhould cenſure his Diſpenſations, and Sin ſo very much when his Rod, and his Stroke was upon us, we ſhould have thought them very cenſorious and uncharitable People; but *there is no man knows how bad his heart is, till it be tried by long and ſore Afflictions.* Our Anguiſh, and our Sorrow, and our deſpairing Fears, cauſed us to do a thouſand things which we ſhould at another ſeaſon tremble at. And ſuch Fools are we, that even when we are beaten in the Mortar, our folly does not depart from us. Tho God have forgiven us, yet we ought to remember our Murmuring,

muring, our Unbelief, and the like Sins, with a great Self-abhorrence all our days. Iſa. 38. 15. *What ſhall I ſay? he hath both ſpoken unto me, and himſelf hath done it: I ſhall go ſoftly all my years, in the bitterneſs of my Soul.* We have cauſed many to be diſcouraged, many to faint, many to reflect upon Religion, becauſe of our ſadneſs; and the diſhonour that may hereby have come to God, ſhould be matter of great Humiliation to us, tho there is in the ſpiritual Affections of the Religious, ſomething that is very tremendous to the Wicked; 'tis as a Judgment to harden them, and for the falling of many, that by this means they are more fixed in their prejudices againſt all Religion; and by ſeeing thoſe that have long pretended to embrace it, very ſorrowful, they are tempted to believe there is nothing real in it, and ſo they go on and ſin and dye. We have great cauſe to be humbled, not to glory in our ſtrength, for we have found it to decay; not to glory in our Knowledg, for we have known ſuch Diſtempers as have caſt a Cloud upon our Underſtanding. We have been buffeted by Satan to teach us, that we have need of more help to preſerve us than our own. Oh! what is Man, when left of God? Nothing but weakneſs and vanity. *He withdraws man from his purpoſe, that he may hide pride from man*, Job 33. 17.

V. We muſt beware of a Relapſe, as we muſt be careful to avoid all thoſe things which may bring upon us the ſame bodily Diſeaſes, from

from which we are delivered; ſo we ought to be as careful to prevent every thing that may bring a new Indiſpoſition and Terror on our Souls, when we are newly come out of the Furnace. Let us beware, that we do not fall again into ſuch Hot and fiery Tryals as thoſe are, which we have felt. Let us for ever be very cautious to avoid every thing that has the appearance, or the ſhew of Sin. And let us for ever be jealous of our own hearts, and watchful over their moſt ſecret motions, ſeeing they have often, alas too often, betrayed us. Let us for ever abſolutely deny all the moſt pleaſing Temptations of the Devil, as remembring that he is the Enemy of God; and remembring withal with what Cruelty and Pride that Enemy of our Salvation inſulted over us when it pleaſed God to leave us for a ſeaſon. Let us remember how he ſuggeſted dreadful and amazing Apprehenſions to us; and let us no more come near the Den of Lyons, nor play upon the hole of Aſps. We have felt the Arrows of the Almighty, let us not provoke him again to bend his Bow, and to ſet us up for a Marke of his Diſpleaſure. It is not long ſince his Waves, and his Billows went over us; oh! let us not plunge our ſelves again into the deep Waters, nor cauſe him to frown, whoſe Frowns we have found to be ſo very terrible. Pſalm 85. 8. *God the Lord will ſpeak peace unto his People, and to his Saints: but let them not turn again to folly.* It was indeed our folly to provoke ſo gracious a God; it was our folly to be indifferent and careleſs in our holy Duties. Let the Rod that hath made us ſmart, for

ever drive away that folly which was once bound up in our hearts. Doleful Experience, and Anguiſh, and Tribulation, has told us what a dreadful thing it is to ſin. By the Judgments that we have groaned under, let us learn righteouſneſs. We are come off the Rack with broken Bones, and with many Wounds, which our good Phyſician has been pleaſed to ſet and heal again. Let us not rebel againſt his Laws, leſt we be put to the Rack again. 'Tis not indeed the Corruptions that are within us, that will bring us to it, unleſs we cheriſh and approve them when they entice us to what is Evil. Tho they war, if it be againſt the allowance of our mind, they will not interrupt our Peace with God. Let us not be ſecure; tho the Devil have left us, it may be only for a ſeaſon, and he may return again with greater fury. Let us, during the comfortable quiet that we now enjoy, be preparing our ſelves to reſiſt and oppoſe all his Aſſaults for the time to come. Let us, tho we triumph through the Grace of God, remember that our Enemies are not yet fully overthrown; they are not aſhamed of one defeat, but will rally their diſperſed Forces, and come again: What did we think of Sin, when it had cauſed the Son of Righteouſneſs to be covered with Clouds, that we could not ſee him, nor feel his vital quickning Beams for many days? What did we think of it, when it had ſet us on fire round about, and brought us to the very Gates of Hell; when it ſunk, and overwhelmed, and terrified us every moment. Let us never henceforth begin to parley with an Enemy that has

has uſed us after ſuch a barbarous and cruel manner.

VI. After we are delivered from the dreadful Apprehenſions of the Wrath of God, it is our duty to be publickly thankful. *Pſal. 66. 16. Come, and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell what he hath done for my ſoul.* 'Tis for the glory of our Healer, to tell the miſerable Wounds that once pained us; and to ſpeak of that kind hand that ſaved us when we were brought very low. 'Tis for the glory of our Pilot, to tell of the Rocks, and of the Sands; the many Dangers, and threatning Calamities, that he by his wiſe Conduct made us to eſcape; and to ſee us on the ſafe Shore, may cauſe others that are yet afflicted, and toſt with Tempeſts, to look to him for help; for he is able, and ready, to ſave them as well as us. We muſt, like Soldiers, when a tedious War is over, relate our Combats, our Fears, our Dangers, with delight; and make known our Experiences to doubting, troubled Chriſtians; and to thoſe that have not yet been under ſuch long and ſevere Tryals as we have been.

VII. The fears that we have had of God, and of his Wrath, muſt teach us not inordinately to fear any of thoſe Evils that are of a lower nature. Others that have been all their days in eaſe and quiet; that have had no trouble of Conſcience, or none for a long while together, may be afraid of temporal Evils, and inconveniences; but to us who have for a long time

been afraid of God himſelf, how ſlight a thing ſhould the Wrath of Man appear! When we have been under his Diſpleaſure that can kill the Soul, what little cauſe have we to fear them that can only kill the Body? Others may be afraid of a ſmall diſtreſs, of a little ill weather; but it does not become us to fear, who have been in ſo many ſeveral Storms for many months together: when we have been afraid of Hell, there is nothing upon Earth that looks with an aſpect ſo formidable: And if God have delivered us from the greateſt Dangers, we ought to believe that he will ſave us from the leſſer Troubles of our Life. Our Experience of ſo many terrible things, ſhould fortify our minds againſt all future Afflictions that are not of the ſame kind. I ſhall cloſe this part of the Verſe with theſe two Advices.

1. If the Servants of God are obnoxious to ſuch ſad apprehenſions of his Wrath; Then you have great cauſe to admire the Peace that is in the World: Many an one among his People is crying, The Lord hath forſaken me; His Wrath lieth hard upon me; and if all his People, if all whoſe Sins deſerve his Wrath, ſhould be all ſo ſenſible of it, and complaining and crying out in the like manner; oh! what a doleful Cry would that be! like the Cry that was in *Sodom*, when it rained Fire and Brimſtone; like the Cry that was in *Egypt*, when they found all their Firſt-born ſlain! Oh what a change would appear in the World, if God ſhould let out the ſenſe of his diſpleaſure upon all that have deſerved it! this World would be like Hell it ſelf; all Commerce and

and Buſineſs would immediately fail; for what heart would men have to trade, to buy, or ſell, if they did not know, but the very next moment they might be in Hell! It is one of the mighty Acts of Providence that maintains ſo great a Calmneſs in a very ſinning-World. For if he were not infinitely patient, if he ſhould open the eyes of all men to ſee his unſpeakable Majeſty, Holineſs, Glory; and their Offences, and their Deſerts, and their nearneſs to Deſtruction, and then ſuffer them, as he juſtly might, to be tortured with their guilty Thoughts, to be tempted, and overcome, and to ſink into deſpair, oh what Lyons and Tygers would men be! they would tear themſelves, and one another. All the Stilneſs of this Earth would be turned into Rage; all its Joys would be turned into gloomy Sorrows; and all its Laughters into Weeping and Wailing, and gnaſhing of Teeth; and all the Inhabitants thereof would be in Anguiſh, and curſe their God and King. The moſt are for the preſent under inſenſibility; they do not ſee whither they are a going, nor feel the horrors that they are capable of: they are treaſuring up wrath, and it is his goodneſs that it does not immediately fall upon their heads in burning drops: there is but a thin Partition between this World, that has in it ſo many ſeveral pleaſant Objects, and that World of flaming Torture, where all is diſmal and uncomfortable; and if the Curtain were drawn aſide, and men could look into that fiery Furnace, and the Wicked did apprehend that they were going thither, oh what conſternation, what amazement,

what paleneſs would be ſeen on every Forehead that is now moſt proud and lifted up!

2. Pray to God that you may not fall into ſuch Diſeaſes, whereof *Satan* is apt to make very great advantage: and alſo pray that *Satan* may not be ſuffered to bring ſuch ſickneſs upon you as will indiſpoſe you for the Service of your Maker. It is of long and ſevere Afflictions that the Devil makes great uſe; and they do in their own nature lead to impatience, and murmuring, and hard thoughts of God, and therefore they may be earneſtly, but always with ſubmiſſion, prayed againſt: And tho, if you be naturally melancholly, all the Prayers in the World will not change your Temper; yet by them that black Humour may be kept from tyrannizing over you, as it hath done over many thouſands: pray againſt all ſuch Diſeaſes as are not common to Men; and which being unknown, cannot be relieved; and which by affecting your natural Spirits, may cauſe you continually to think, and with tormented anxious thoughts; ſo that you ſhall be a terror to your ſelves, unable to follow your Calling; and yet by not affecting you ſo viſibly as other Diſeaſes do, expoſe you to the uncharitable Cenſures of your Friends, and to the Reproach of them: as alſo may we pray againſt ſuch Afflictions as do diſturb our Reaſon, that we cannot think, nor exerciſe our Faculties as we uſed to do; as it is lawful to pray for the removal of Afflictions; *Job* 20. 22. So alſo to deſire, *That his ſtroaks may not be over-heavy upon us; and that he would remember our frame, and how we are but duſt.* If we have been in Diſeaſes

Diſeaſes that have overwhelmed us, it is our duty to pray, and to uſe all imaginable care, that we do not fall into the like again; and to pray for others, that they may never fall into any ſuch; for of all other Diſtempers, there is none ſo inſupportable, and ſo terrible. When we beg new Favours of God for our ſelves, we muſt remember others, and wiſh that they may never feel what we have felt. Beggars (as one obſerves) when they crave an Alms, frequently uſe this for a Motive; That the Perſon of whom they beg, may be preſerved from that miſery whereof they themſelves have had woful Experience. If they be blind, they ſay, God bleſs your Eye-ſight: If Lame, God bleſs your Limbs: if undone by caſual burning, God bleſs you and yours from Fire. So we may ſay to our Redeemer; Lord, mayſt thou never be put to freſh Agonies by the deep Diſtreſſes and Agonies of thy poor bleeding Servants: And to you that are good, we may ſay, The Lord preſerve your peace; *The Lord bleſs you, and make his face to ſhine upon you*; the Joy of your Lord be your ſtrength; the Lord give you the ſweet hopes and foretaſte of Heaven; and we wiſh that you may never drink ſo much Wormwood and Gall as we have drunk; that you may never ſee, and know, and feel ſuch Terrors, and ſo much of Hell as we have felt. It is our duty, as I have ſaid, to pray againſt ſuch Diſeaſes which have an influence for the moſt part upon the mind: though it would be a thought very Atheiſtical, to imagine, that all inward horror of Conſcience comes from bodily diſtreſs; for

God, *to whom all things are naked and open*, can make immediate impreſſions of his Wrath upon the Soul, that ſhall fill it with ſudden amazement and trouble; yet I verily believe, that of all the Chriſtians that are under dreadful fears of Wrath, and in long Terror, there is not one in twenty but whoſe inward trouble comes either from a Melancholly Temper, or from a multiplication of ſharp and ſevere outward Afflictions; and from theſe the Devil takes an opportunity to throw his fiery Darts, and to put them all into a flame. Thoſe that know how great Temptations attend long-continued Afflictions, will heartily pray againſt them; to which I ſhall only add two Queſtions, and ſo conclude this Firſt Part.

Queſt. If the Anger of God be but for a moment, what ſhall we think of thoſe with whom he is angry to their dying day, and who dye in apprehenſion of his diſpleaſure?

Anſw. It is very true, his Servants may dye in theſe Circumſtances: And it is to their poor Souls a very uncomfortable Paſſage; it is very ſad to the Servants of God, for of ſuch I ſpeak, to go to Heaven, ſpeaking in one ſenſe the Language of Hell: 'Tis a myſterious, and a very deep tranſaction of Providence, that is wiſe and good, though it be not underſtood; but many a Believer, even at laſt, in his dejected apprehenſions, thinks himſelf an Heir of the Curſe, that finds himſelf to be an Heir of Glory. *Many a time*, as one ſaid once by a Perſon dying in

in trouble, *the Sun ſets in a Cloud, and yet ariſes in a marvellous Light:* or as Mr. *Dod* ſaid once to a Miniſter that ask'd him what he could ſay to one going out of the World, and had no Comfort; *What*, anſwered he, *will you ſay to the Son of God himſelf, who, when he was dying, complained he was forſaken?* It is, as I mentioned before, ſad to the Perſon himſelf, and ſad to his Relations, whom he takes his leave of in ſuch dolful Expreſſions: His ſorrowful departure may bring ſome of them alſo down to the grave in ſorrow; but yet they may, after all their mourning, meet with joy in the great day; and their mutual ſorrows at their parting may encreaſe their joy when they meet again: many an one dyes with a dreadful ſound in his ears, as if he were a Reprobate, and a Caſt-away, whom God will bleſs; and who, immediately after his diſſolution, ſhall hear a comfortable Sentence: many an one does Satan purſue, and hunt like a Bird upon the Mountains, who ſhall arrive ſafely at his Eternal Home; where neither his Malice, nor his Spite, ſhall ever enter. Many an one wanders about here, like *Noah*'s Dove, finding no reſt, whom God will take into his Ark: And though he ſeem to be fallen into the very Belly of Hell, yet ſhall riſe again in a bleſſed Immortality: And thoſe Eyes which were cloſed with tears, ſhall in peace ſee the Lord: We muſt not judg ſuch Perſons, whoſe Troubles continue to the laſt moment of their Lives; for if they have been holy in their Converſation, they ſhall enter into reſt; tho by a way that is very dark and frightful: *Moſes* by the

diſpleaſure

Diſpleaſure of God againſt him for his Provocation, dyed, and came ſhort of that *Canaan* which he very much deſired to poſſeſs; but when he was in Heaven, he was fully ſatisfied; and in his God he met with all that he before could deſire.

Q. 2. But ſuppoſe a perſon be diſtracted with the terrors of the Lord, and dye in that woful condition, the Anger of God towards ſuch an one ſeems to be very great; And how is it conſiſtent with his Promiſe, *That all things ſhall work together for good to them that love him?* A diſtracted perſon can exerciſe no Grace, cannot think of God aright, cannot commit himſelf to Jeſus Chriſt, nor put his ſoul into any fit poſture, by Faith and Patience, for his Lord's coming.

Anſw. This has a relation to the former Queſtion; and what I then ſaid, may give ſome anſwer to this; and indeed, all terror long continued in a ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure, is attended with diſtraction. What Man can have his eyes opened to ſee God againſt him as he thinks, and to ſee Hell, as he thinks, preparing for him, and yet have calm and quiet thoughts! It muſt needs fill him with horror and confuſion, it muſt needs eclipſe his Reaſon, and put all his Apprehenſions into an inexpreſſible ferment, to ſee himſelf ſo like to periſh; He can mind nothing elſe, nor think of nothing elſe but his danger and his miſery; this always returns, this always perplexes and overwhelms him.

I have

I have met but with one that ever handled this Queſtion, and becauſe of his Judgment, his Learning, and the good report that he has in the Churches of Chriſt, I will give you the ſubſtance of his Anſwer.

1. This may be for the good of others. Is there not many a leſſon that ſuch as are not ſo afflicted, may learn from ſo ſad a Providence? May not they learn more to admire the Goodneſs and the Mercy of God to them, that they are not in the like caſe? And it is ſo far good to the perſon himſelf, tho he diſcern it not, that he is uſed as an Inſtrument to promote the Glory of God.

2. It may (as he ſays) do him the ſame good as Death will; *i. e.* deliver him from the evil to come, from the beholding of ſuch Sorrows on the Church, or on his Friends, as would have been a daily torment to him, and on which being deprived of the uſe of his Reaſon, he cannot reflect with ſo great a grief, as otherwiſe he would have done. Or,

3. By this means the Wiſe God may have prevented his falling into many ſuch Sins and Temptations as might have been very hurtful to others, and have more defiled his own Soul: And who knows but this may be the caſe of the diſtracted Perſon? *See Mr.* Richard Allen's *Godly man's Portion*, p. 62, 63.

Thus,

Thus, Reader, we have been travelling as through a Wilderneſs of Fiery Serpents: You have, as I may ſo ſay, born me company, whilſt I have been ſhewing you how God leads his Children through a Deſart, and the Houſe of Bondage: And I hope it has not been without ſome profit to ſome poor Troubled Souls, for whoſe ſakes eſpecially I have ſo long inſiſted on this Subject. In the following Part I ſhall, with God's Aſſiſtance, lead you to the brighter ſide of the Cloud; where you will not meet with things very Doleful, but very Pleaſant.

A DISCOURSE Concerning TROUBLE of MIND, AND THE DISEASE of MELANCHOLY.

PART II.

PSAL. XXX. 5.

In his favour is Life.

CHAP. I.

Of the ſeveral ſorts of Life that we enjoy by God's favour; and in what conditions of our preſent Pilgrimage it doth more eſpecially revive us.

1. IN *God's favour is our Natural life:* We are the work of his hands, and his kindneſs and bounty does continually maintain what he at firſt created; his Providence ſecures us from innumerable dangers; he gives us meat and drink, and health and ſtrength; but his diſpleaſure does quickly deprive us of all theſe. 'Tis ſaid of all the

creatures, *Pſal.* 104. 28, 29. *What thou giveſt them, they gather; thou openeſt thy hand, they are filled with good. Thou hideſt thy face, they are troubled; thou takeſt away their breath, they dye and return to the duſt.* 'Tis this great God to whom we owe our peace and plenty, our liberties, and all the comforts we enjoy; he ſaves our Bodies from Plague and long ſickneſs, and pining, waſting ſorrows; all the delight we have in our Friends, in our Families, or in our Relations, flows from his goodneſs, and his meer mercy; and 'tis he that ſaves our Houſes from Fire, our Eſtates from Robbers; and our Country from deſolating Wars. *Pſ.* 30. 7. *Lord, by thy favour, thou haſt made my mountain to ſtand ſtrong.* Man being the nobleſt creature, and the moſt dignified in all this lower World, God has appointed the lower creatures to Miniſter to his uſe, and his delight. The Air, as one obſerves, is his Aviary; the Sea and Rivers his Fiſhponds; the Vallies his Granary, the Mountains his Magazine: The firſt affords Man creatures for nouriſhment, the other Metals for perfection. The Animals were created for the ſupport of the Life of Man; the Herbs, the Dews and Rains, for the ſame purpoſe; there is not the moſt deſpicable thing in the whole creation, but is endowed with a nature to contribute ſomething for our welfare, either as food to nouriſh us when we are healthful, or as Medicine to cure us when we are diſtempered; or as a Garment to cloath us when we are naked, and arm us againſt the cold of the ſeaſon; or as a refreſhment when we are weary;

or

or as a delight when we are ſad; all ſerve for neceſſity or ornament, either to ſpread our Table, beautify our Dwellings, furniſh our Cloſets, or ſtore our VVardrobes. *The whole earth is full of his Riches*, Pſal. 104. 24.

2. *Spiritual Life is in his favour*; 'Tis he that draws the firſt lineaments of the new creature, and his hand that brings it to perfection; he firſt infuſes a vital principle into the ſoul that is dead in ſin, and that maintains it afterwards againſt all the powerful motions of ſin, and againſt all the ſtratagems and tentations of the Devil; from his own Grace he did elect his people to Salvation, and gives them in time his word and his ſpirit to quicken them, together with all thoſe other bleſſings of Adoption, and Juſtification, and Sanctification, which are the product and the fruit of his Electing Love: The firſt quickning, and thoſe exerciſes of Life afterwards which his choſen do perform; the firſt motion, and the renewed ſtrength which they receive, to enable them to walk in his ways, is his own gift; 'tis his pardon that beſtows upon his Servants a new Life, when they were dead in Law, and could ſee nothing to enſue but a terrible execution. 'Tis his favour that contrived the way of our eſcape from death through the Blood of Chriſt, and that was pleaſed to accept of the ſufferings of that Holy perſon in our ſtead: That Faith is of his own operation, which unites us to his Son, the fountain of Life, and conveys quickening influences to us. Joh. 5. 24. *He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting life,*

life, and ſhall not enter into condemnation; but is paſſed from death to life. This Faith is of his beſtowing, which enables us to be moderate in our proſperity, and to bear the Croſs when we are afflicted. All thoſe acts that are the fruit of the New Birth, as well as the New birth it ſelf, are the work of his own hands; for he gives both to will and to do, he teaches us to fight againſt our ſpiritual enemies, and his power being employed for us, cauſes us to get the Victory. When we are bewildred, his Word is our guide to direct us; and when we are fainting, we have many great and precious Promiſes to revive our ſpirits; when we are in darkneſs, and when we are in danger, he is both our Sun and Shield; his Wind blows upon our Gardens, and cauſes the Spices to flow forth; he excites and quickens our Graces, when they begin to languiſh; and when we are lukewarm and cold, he makes us to be lively and fervent in the performance of our holy Duties; for (as one ſays) what the Soul is to the Body, to move it to natural things, to breathe, to eat, to walk, and the like, the ſame is the Spirit of God in our Souls, to move us to ſpiritual actions, as the fear of God, love to him, and truſt in him, and all the works of Righteouſneſs, Charity, Humility, Patience and Sobriety, that are the motions of the new creature; ſo that we may ſay of this Spirit, that he is the Soul of our Souls; and take away this Spirit, and the Soul reſembles a dead Body, it has no zeal for God, no compunction, no tenderneſs. When we are diſconſolate, one kind look from God makes

makes us to be of good chear. When our hearts are benumb'd, and our Eyes are dry, he melts them into tears with his Love: When we are unfruitful, he ſends his Dew upon our branches, that makes us to flouriſh in his Courts, and to look freſh and green; and when we are under Spiritual decays, he cauſes us to thrive; when we backſlide, he heals our backſlidings; he brings us, through the great Mediator, into a nearneſs to, and acquaintance with himſelf: For as far as we are diſtant from him, ſo far are we removed from true and real Life. When we wander, he recals us; he ſends us freſh influences, and eſtabliſhes our goings, when our motions are like thoſe of a wounded body, very faint and tottering.

3. *Eternal Life is in his favour.* Hence it is ſaid, *That Eternal life is the gift of God*, Rom. 6. 23. Pſal. 16. 11. *Thou wilt ſhew me the path of life: in thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, at thy right hand are pleaſures for evermore.* It is there that they are ſaid *to ſee God*; for the ſight of his face, is that which makes it to be ſuch a glorious and delightful place. His Wrath is that which kindles Hell; the withholding of his Favour makes it to be ſuch a dark and gloomy Dungeon; and the clear manifeſtation of it does make all the Glories of the Cœleſtial Paradiſe. And therefore *Jacob* when he had a Viſion of God's Favour to him, ſaid, *This place is no other than the gate of Heaven.* Frame not to your ſelves a groſs and a material Happineſs; 'tis all in the Love and Favour of God. To ſee him, fills all the Souls above with ineffable delight; to be deprived of this bleſſed pri- Gen. 28. 17.

vilege, fills all the Souls in miſery, with Mourning and Lamentation. To his Saints, *God will be all in all*: his Communications will be entire and full there. † As the Creatures are of divers orders, every one receives its portion of Divine Favour, different from that of others. He communicates himſelf otherwiſe to the Heavens, than to the Earth; otherwiſe to an Angel than to a Man. The Earth hath an Image of his firmneſs; the Sun hath an image of his beauty; the Heaven an image of his immenſity; and ſo in others; but there is no Creature that has aſſembled in it ſelf, all the beams of the Communications of God. It ſhall be otherwiſe in Paradiſe; God ſhall be all things in the Saints, and they ſhall be filled with his Favour. And as he further ſays, 'God is not ſo all in all, 'in the Faithful here; the troubles of our Con'ſcience, the weakneſs of our Faith, the lan'guors of our Devotion, the ſhadows of our 'Knowledge; our Sins, our Miſeries, our 'Sickneſs, and our Death, are the fruits of the 'Fall; and of the Malice of the Devil: But in 'that Felicity there ſhall be nothing of US in 'us; nothing of the Impreſſion of the Devil: 'All ſhall be of God; our Shadows ſhall be 'ſwallowed up by his Light, and our Weakneſs 'by his power: It is a ſtate of Glory, and Glory 'is a mixture of all the Bleſſings of God, in a 'degree Sovereignly perfect. That Country that is above, is indeed the Land of the Living, they Live, and ſhall never Dye. But this Earth is a Region and a place of Death. For beſide that which is Natural, the moſt part of men

Lettres de Monſieur *Claude p.* 10.

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are dead in Sin; and truly even thoſe that are alive, have but a weak and a fainting Life. There it is that that the Saints ſhall be admirers of the Grace and Favour of God: That after various difficulties, and innumerable temptations, and overwhelming fears, did at laſt bring them to that happy Place. For the poor trembling Saint, that thought himſelf caſt off, and forſaken of God, to find himſelf in his Arms, in his Preſence, in his Heaven, how great will his joy and praiſe be! How will he aſcribe all his life there, to the meer Favour and Grace of God, that ſhall ſet him at liberty, when by his many Sins he had deſerved to be bound in Eternal Chains! That ſhall cauſe him to ſing Hallelujahs, when others weep and wail for ever! How will he admire that Grace that has placed him in Heaven, when ſo many others are in Hell! And the more admire, when he ſhall conſider, that this diſtinction of States was freely made; That that Crown which will adorn his Head, was freely given! How will every look on God, fill his Soul with a wondring Joy, becauſe he freely gave his Son! How will every view of Chriſt encreaſe his wonder! When he ſhall conſider, that he freely undertook the kind work of his Redemption; that he freely ſhed his Blood, and paid the debt which the Sinner himſelf could never pay; and that he freely gave the Spirit, and offered that Salvation upon eaſy terms, *without money and without price*, which coſt him very dear! All the Saints above will continually adore the Riches of his Grace, that admitted them to Glory, when they deſerved to

be ſhut out as well as others! That they were deformed, till he put his comelineſs upon them! That they were liable to Death, till he juſtified them; and polluted in their Natures till he renewed them; and dying till he made them to live! That they learned nothing, but what he taught them; had nothing, but what he gave them; did nothing, but what he enabled them to do. So that all muſt be wonderful in their Eyes, from the beginning of God's deſign for their Salvation, to the concluſion of it. And when it is all finiſhed, they muſt with loud Praiſes ſing, Grace, Grace. *By Grace ye are ſaved, through faith; and that not of your ſelves, it is the Gift of God*, Eph. 2. 8.

Firſt, *No common Mercy yields any Comfort, without the Favour and Love of God. His loving-kindneſs is better than life*, Pſal. 63. 3. If a man have all that he can wiſh, every thing that is ſplendid and delightful, every thing that may pleaſe his Eye, or gratify his Appetite, if he have not this with the Love of God, he is a Miſerable man: For this will mingle Wormwood and Gall with all his Entertainments; to think that God is his Enemy; that theſe common Bleſſings may conclude in Hell; and that by all that he Eats, and all that he Drinks, he may be but Fatting for the day of Slaughter: Whilſt he is allowing himſelf in all the Carnal gratifications, by a little conſideration, he may diſcern a Two-edged Sword that hangs over his head, and ſee a Gulph below that is ready to ſwallow him, and devour all his hopes and joys; and that all his comforts depend upon the ſlender thread

thread of Life; and that here is but a small partition between him and Everlasting Burnings: How does this fill him with Amazement and Consternation! With Fear and Horror! And whilst he is most Jovial, he may see a dreadful Handwriting on the Wall, that may make his Knees to smite one against another, and overthrow all his mirth and pleasure. Alas! What does it signify to a man, if all the World smile upon him, if he be under the Wrath and the Frowns of God? They cannot shelter him from the coming storm, nor skreen him from the Consuming Fire. What a small satisfaction is it to a Condemned Malefactor, that the partakers of his Wickedness applaud and careis him, when his Execution draws near, and the day of his Death will put an end to all his Hopes? What Peace can a Sinner have, who has the Lord of Hosts against him? How can he lye down with Comfort, when he knows not but he may awake in Flames? With what ease can he look upon any thing he enjoys, when he knows not but the next moment he himself may be destroyed and lost for evermore? And that his next remove, may be to the Grave, and to a place full of Torment? What Comfort can he find from loud laughters, from cheerful Company, from vain Sports, when it may be the next moment he may be in a place where there is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth? Without the favour of God, all that is in the World, all its Promises, all its Pleasures, all its Friendships, all its Entertainments, are meer

Vanity and Vexation of Spirit; If a man fare deliciouſly every day, if he drink of the moſt ſparkling VVine, if he procure all the Spices of the Eaſt, and all the Riches of the VVeſt; thoſe will not keep his heart from Sorrows, nor theſe ſecure him from the Wrath to come. Theſe things are very grateful whilſt he is embodied, whilſt he can Hear, and Smell, and Taſt. But what ſhall a man that is a ſtranger to God do, when he is turned into a Spirit? VVhat ſhall an Immortal Soul do, when all theſe Corporal goods are paſt away? VVhere will be his proviſion? VVhat will be his entertainment, when he is lodged in the Eternal world? VVhen he ſhall no more hear the Muſick, that once charm'd and gratified his Senſe; when he ſhall no more ſee thoſe Beauties that he once admired and doted on? How muſt his Soul that purſued nothing but a Temporal and a Carnal Happineſs, in that *State of Separation*, be filled with Uneaſineſs and Regret, with Anguiſh and Deſpair, to ſee it ſelf ſtript of all its ancient Comforts; and to have nothing remaining that is Comfortable! To be full of flaming deſires, and to have nothing wherewith to quench the raging Flame! All that is preſent, without the Favour of God, is but like Graſs upon the Houſe tops; it flatters us with a falſe opinion of its high ſtation, it looks fair and green, *but the mower has not wherewith to fill his hand*, it quickly fades and withers away; but with God *is the Fountain of Life*, Pſal. 36. 9. a Fountain that ſupplies us with vital ſtreams, and ceaſes not to refreſh, till it mingle with the

the *River of delight, that makes glad the City of God*, Pſal. 46. 4. The glories of this World are ſoon covered with night and darkneſs; but he is a Sun that ever ſhines, and from whence iſſues nothing but cheering and reviving Light. Hence, *a little that a righteous man hath, is better than the Revenue of many Wicked*, Prov. 15, 16. *Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treaſure, and trouble therewith.* His little is given him with a Bleſſing, and their multitude of things attended with a Curſe: His Temporal Mercies are the forerunners of Eternal; he taſts a ſweetneſs in what he has, becauſe he is ſure that it flows from the Love of God. *He can eat his bread with joy, and drink his wine with a chearful heart; becauſe his works are accepted*, Eccleſ. 9. 7.

2. *The Favour of God is Life in all temporal Wants and Afflictions:* No Affliction can be born, if a man do not ſee his Fatherly Goodneſs orders and directs the moſt ſharp and bitter Cup. How can a man hold out in trouble, when he knows not but it may be to him the beginning of Sorrows? With what grief muſt he weep, that knows not that his tears ſhall ever be wiped away? How deeply muſt he ſigh, that looks upon his ſtroke to be the ſtroke of an Enemy, and the chaſtiſement of a Cruel one? *Jer.* 30. 14, 15. But now the Favour of God reconciles the Soul to his moſt ſevere and myſterious Diſpenſations; and teaches it to be ſilent under his hand; and to believe, that though he is angry now, yet he will not be ſo for ever. When a poor Soul looks round about, and ſees vexation and trouble over all the World; this Favour of

God encourages him to look above, where he finds a calm and reſt. When the men in whom he moſt confided, prove deceitful, and when from thoſe from whom he expected the greateſt kindneſs, he meets with the greateſt diſappointments, then he can have recourſe to that God that will never change: when he is left alone, and forſaken, the Divine Preſence gives him Honey in the Wilderneſs, and turns his Dungeon into a Paradiſe; what he wants in the Creatures, is plentifully ſupplied in his bleſſed and glorious Creator: And though he be poor in the World, *yet he is rich in faith*; Jam. 2. 5. Though he have nothing on Earth that he can call his own, yet what a ſweet ſupport is it to think, that God is his: what need he care, though he be caſt off by all the World, when God receives him? What need he care if they condemn him, when the Sovereign Judge of all does acquit him and bids him *be of good chear, for his ſins are forgiven?* He need not fear all their daring Threats, their Inſolence and Pride, when he can look up with *Stephen*, and ſee Jeſus at the right hand of God to plead his Cauſe. Though he loſe his Friends, and his Earthly Comforts, yet he has an Almighty Friend that he can never loſe. Every Correction is grateful to a Soul thus priviledg'd; for how unpleaſant ſoever it be for the preſent, he knows it ſhall promote his final good; *Rom.* 8. 28. He knows that his heavenly Father tutors him by ſo ſharp a diſcipline for his own glorious Kingdom; and relies upon his faithful Promiſe to bring him thither: he knows, when he is moſt pained, he is under

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the Conduct of a tender, and a skilful Phyſician; that though he ſearch his Sore, will not fail to advance and compleat his Cure; and therefore does encourage himſelf to truſt in him, whom he ſhall praiſe *as the health of his countenance, and his God:* He knows, that when he is thrown down by Sickneſs, the Everlaſting Arms will be underneath; and that he ſhall be ſtrengthned with ſtrength in his Soul, when his Body begins to decay: but now without the favour of God, every little Croſs proves a burthen too heavy for us to bear. When a man thinks with himſelf thus; Theſe pains that I feel, are the wounds of an Enemy; when a man ſees nothing but what is diſmal, dark and troubleſome, and has no proſpect of a dawning or approaching Light, how ſad and how overwhelmed muſt he needs be? how ſmall a thing will ſink us, when the Comforter that ſhould relieve our Souls, is departed? *Lam.* 1. 16.

3. *This Favour of God is Life to us in the Troubles of our Conſcience*; and there are no Troubles in the World like to theſe; *Pſal.* 88. 3, 4. In all other Troubles, our Friends by their kind Diſcourſes, and their pitiful Expreſſions, may mitigate our Sorrow; but how can they ſpeak peace, when God has declared a War againſt us! *Job* 34. 29. *When he giveth quietneſs, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?* When he in his juſt diſpleaſure raiſes a Storm, who can make the Waters ſmooth again? When the Sun is once ſet, can all the power of Nature make it to riſe again. Other Troubles make the Body droop, but

but theſe make the Soul it ſelf to languiſh, and to pine away: What but the Favour of God can revive us, when our Hearts, under the ſenſe of Sin and Guilt, begin to dye within us! When our Sins are ſet in order before us, who can free us from the formidable ſight? Who but he can teach our hands to fight, and to get the Victory? When we are awakened with the ſenſe of Wrath, with the fear of Hell, and of Deſtruction, who can cloſe our eyes again? When we are under theſe inward Wounds, who can pour in Oyl, who can bind them up, or heal them, but he alone? When our Conſciences accuſe us for our former and our later Sins, who then can plead our Cauſe? who can be on our ſide, when God himſelf has overthrown us? When the ſpiritual and holy Law ſlays us, who can give us Life? When the Word pronounces a dreadful Sentence againſt us, who is able to reverſe it? Who in Heaven or Earth can be our Helper, if we find not help in God? Who will give us any comfort, when through the terrors of our Souls we are looking for the Wrath to come? Who will give us reſt, when we lie down, and riſe again, with a ſenſe of the Fury, and the Diſpleaſure of the Lord? *Deut.* 28. 66, 67. VVhen a Soul is continually venting its preſaging Fears, and ſaying, Now I am troubled, but I ſhall ſhortly be in much greater trouble: now I am with my Friends, but it may be ſhortly I ſhall be with Devils: now I am on Earth, but it may be ſhortly I ſhall be in Hell: now the Favour of God brings life to the dying Soul: one beam of his favour cauſes the diſcon-

diſconſolate Mourner to lay aſide his mourning Garments, and to rejoice. After long Terrors, how ſweet is the Voice of God that brings the news of a pardon? how welcome are the Tidings of a Pardon to a Malefactor at the very place of Execution; and when God has brought us out of the deep Waters, and the miry Pit, our very Bones begin to rejoice: it ſpreads a chearfulneſs over every part, to think that one whom we had ſo highly offended, will yet be reconciled again; it raiſes us even to tranſport and wonder; what, will he be gracious and merciful to ſuch as we are! Is it not pleaſant after a long war, to be at peace; after hard labour, to reſt; after a long Journey, to arrive at our home? ſo it will be to ſee the Face of God after a long darkneſs to ſhine upon us again. As a devout Lady once ſaid; 'I have found him 'whom I ſought; the Love of my Soul, and 'the Joy of mine Heart; My Lord, and my 'God: Now my Joys return, I now behold the 'Face of God, and feel his Comforts in the 'ſervice and worſhip of him; and therefore 'every hour ſeems five till the hour of Prayer 'comes; till by Contemplations and Meditations I bring my God to my Soul. I could 'wiſh every one of the days for the ſolemn 'worſhip of God, to be a *Joſhua*'s day, the 'longeſt is too ſhort for me; and my wonted 'hours of Devotion and Meditation are too narrow a confinement for them: and when I am 'refreſht with the Comforts of God, my heart 'dilates it ſelf further by looking on the Joys of 'Heaven; for if there be ſuch joy, during the

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See *Life of the Counteſs of* Falkland, *p.* 22.

Seed time, how infinite is the joy of Harveſt. What can be more great, more delicious, and more comfortable, than to find that the Sun of Righteouſneſs will ſhine upon us with his healing beams; aſſuring us of his Grace here, and of his Glory in the World to come? To ſee that Hell, and that Curſe of the Law in which we thought our ſelves involved, to be under our feet! to ſee the Yoke of Sin broken, and the power of Death aboliſht! to ſee the Heavenly Sanctuary open, and Chriſt our Salvation on the Throne, reaching out to us his hand, and guarding us to that happineſs which he hath purchaſed with his Blood! Oh! how cold, and how miſerable are all the Delights of the World to ſuch a delightful ſight as this? and how happy are the People whoſe God is the Lord! No Pleaſures, no Creature-comforts, no merry Songs can give quiet to a troubled Soul without the Favour, and the Love of God: till he come, all other methods do but make the Clouds more black, and encreaſe our Sorrows.

4. *His Favour is Life in the vehement Aſſaults and Temptations of the Devil.* When the ſtrong man armed comes againſt us, when he darts his fiery darts, what can hurt us, if he compaſs us about with *his loving-kindneſs as with a ſhield? Pſal.* 5. 12. He can diſarm the Tempter, and reſtrain his Malice, and tread him under our feet. If God be not with us, if he do not give us ſufficient Grace; ſo ſubtle, ſo powerful, ſo politick an Enemy will be too hard for us: how ſurely are we foil'd, and get the worſe, when we

we pretend to grapple with him in our own ſtrength. How many falls, and how many bruiſes by thoſe falls have we got, by relying too much on our own skill? How often have we had the help of God, when we have humbly ask'd it! And how ſure are we to get the Victory, *if Chriſt pray for us that our faith do not fail!* Luk. 22. 31. Where can we go for ſhelter, but unto God our Maker! when this Lyon of the Foreſt does begin to roar, how will he terrify and vex us, till he that permits him for a while to trouble us, be pleaſed to chain him up again!

5. *God's Favour is Life, even in Death it ſelf.* He cures all the diſorders of the Soul: He weans it from the Body, and makes the paſſage to another World ſweet and eaſie: He can take away the frightful, ghaſtly aſpect of Death, and beſtow upon it a pleaſant and amiable look: and hence it is, that ſick People are often heard to ſay; *Oh! If I had but the Favour, and the Love of God, I could be freely willing to dye even in this moment! If I had but his Love, I could bear all theſe pains, and quietly ſubmit, though I have reſtleſs nights, and weary days; for then I ſhould be ſure of Eternal Reſt.* It is our eſtrangedneſs from God that makes us live in bondage all our days; and when our time to dye is come, makes us ſo very loth to depart. This ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure makes a Death-bed to be a Bed of ſorrow; and makes Death to be indeed the King of Terrors: and who can but tremble, when he finds himſelf leaving this World, and knows not what will be his portion in the next? that finds himſelf

himſelf going to the Judgment-ſeat, but knows not whether he ſhall be acquitted or condemned there! how many times do the very thoughts of Death cut us in our Sickneſs to the very Soul, becauſe our ſpirits are clouded, and our evidence for Salvation is departed even before we depart, ſo that we ſtand trembling on the borders of Eternity, and would fain ſtay on Earth, though we cannot? VVhat but the favour of God will help us? *When our heart*, and *our fleſh fails, He will be the ſtrength of our heart, and our portion for ever*, Pſ. 73. 26. VVhat but this will attend us through the ſhady Vale? How can we part with our Friends, if God be not our Friend? How can we leave this Earthly Tabernacle, if we have not an Houſe not made with Hands? How ſhall we look upon ſo vaſt a Change, as that of Time into Eternity, if we are not to change this Mortal for a better Life? But one ſmile of the Face of God in that great and concluding-work, will keep us that we ſhall not be afraid to dye: one fore-taſte of Heaven will make us with undaunted hearts to bid this ſinful VVorld adieu; we ſhall then like *Moſes*, undreſs our ſelves, and dye: we ſhall with the ſame chearfulneſs go down to the Grave, which *Jacob* went with into *Egypt*; becauſe our Mediator and our elder Brother lives, and has made good proviſion for us. VVe ſhall not be amazed to lie down in the duſt, when once we have the hope of a bleſſed and a glorious Reſurrection; and the day of our death will be a comfortable day, if our bleſſed Lord be then pleaſed to tell us, that on the ſame day we ſhall be with him in Paradiſe.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of Heaven and Hell, and of that ſpiritual death which hath ſeized the greateſt part of the World. As alſo the Reaſon why Good people are many times very willing to dye; and of the inexcuſableneſs and miſery of thoſe who are without God's favour: And whence it is that ſome grow in Grace more than others, and are more earneſt for a ſhare in the Love of God.

Inf. 1. WHat a bleſſed and glorious place is *Heaven, that is full of God's favour! The City had no need of the ſun, neither of the moon to ſhine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof*, Rev. 21. 23. Rev. 22. 2, 3, 4, 5. It is the Land of the Living, and 'tis no wonder that death ſhall never enter thither; here indeed he is a God that hides himſelf, he is hid under the veil of the Creatures, and under abundance of myſterious Providences; for tho' his Throne be eſtabliſhed in Righteouſneſs, yet Clouds and Darkneſs are round about it, *Pſal.* 97. 7. Beams of his Glory do every where break forth through every Creature, Providence, Law, and Ordinance of his; yet much of his Glory that ſhines in the Creation, is hid by a train of ſecond Cauſes, through which few look to the firſt; his work

in the World is carried on in a myſtery; his Intereſt lives, but is depreſt; they who are devoted to him, are ſupported, indeed, by his inviſible hand; but are in the mean time low for the moſt part, and afflicted: But in that Eternal ſtate, the Veil ſhall be rent, and he will in a brighter manner ſhew himſelf; his Glory will ſhine out with direct and pleaſant Beams to all the beholding and admiring eyes; he will there give forth the full and ſatisfying Communications of his Love, that will chear, and ſatisfy, and refreſh a vaſt multitude of grateful and adoring ſpirits. Here the Souls of good Men are depreſt by the miſrepreſentations of Satan, and by the frequent jealouſies and ſuſpitions of their own guilty ſouls; but there they ſhall ſee him as he is; and which will encreaſe their joy, ſee him to be their own God for ever. No ſtorms ſhall there moleſt their Peace, nothing ſhall interrupt their Eternal Calm: Not a vain, tumultuous, repining or uneaſie thought ſhall aſſault their peaceful and quiet hearts for ever; No more ſhall they cry out, Is his Mercy clean gone? Has he forgotten to be gracious? for they ſhall be with him in his own preſence. Here his Family is compoſed of ſeveral diſtreſſed, mourning, Children, and when ſome praiſe him, their praiſes are diſturb'd by the groans of others, or their own ſins; but there, they ſhall all be clothed with praiſe, and none ſhall be ſick or dye. If we did but know that there were a place in the World, where the people never dye, the love that all have of Life would put them upon many in-

Mr. How, of delighting in God. *p.* 353.

inquiries, how they might get thither. This Country is Heaven; thence death, and fear, and conſternation is baniſhed for ever; and thither ſhould we lift up our eyes, thither ſhould we direct our hearts; in Heaven the favour of God ſhines with an unclouded brightneſs; they that are Inhabitants of that holy place, are employed in an honourable attendance on their mighty King; they need not, they deſire not any of thoſe enjoyments which are here below, no more than favourites of their Prince deſire a meaner ſtation, or a poor Cottage, or ſome obſcure and forlorn retreat. And alas! what are all our pleaſures, and our moſt ſplendid entertainments, to that Bread, and to thoſe ſpiritual and intellectual Joys which Angels and glorified ſouls feed on! The firſt hour, the firſt day of joy there, is better than an Age of joys here below; if one day ſpent in his Courts, in his Love and Praiſes here, be better than a thouſand elſewhere, What will one day in Heaven be! There we ſhall not live upon things meaner than our ſelves; we ſhall there have no mean complacencies, nor diſhonourable cares; in the favour and the ſight of God we ſhall have a taſte of all excellencies and delights, without the leaſt mixture of evil; and what tranſports ſhall we have, when we come to the full view of him, the ſight of whom, even at this diſtance, was ſo ſweet and comfortable to us! When after all our doubtings, our fears, and our ſad thoughts, we find that we have, through many dangers, gain'd our Port.

Inf. 2. *If the favour of God be life, O! what a doleful place is hell*, where this favour never comes! *Job* 10. laſt *verſ.* How black is their darkneſs, and how long and tedious is their night that ſhall never have the dawn of day! Oh! how terrible and how frightful is the ſecond death! A death that torments the ſeparated ſoul! A death that baniſhes it from the preſence of the Lord! A death that excludes it from all comfortable ſight of God! There the Damned ſee him as a Judge, feel his amazing terrors; but they would gladly, if they could, wrap themſelves in darkneſs, and never ſee ſuch a frowning and a dreadful God; there is anguiſh, and wo, and tribulation; and the continual groan and cry of that place, *God is gone away from us for ever.* His Face and his Light chears his Saints; but it ſcorches us, and puts us all into a flame. This is the language of their miſery, That God will ſhew them no pity; That he is deaf to their cries, and has ſhut up his bowels that once earned over them, in Eternal wrath: That he once indeed would have been reconciled, and they would not; and now they ſhall never have an offer of his favour any more. Oh! poor forſaken ſouls! what ſhall they do that have no God to give them help, no Mediator to plead their Cauſe, no Phyſician to bind up their wounds, no kind hand to give them the leaſt comfort! nothing but wrath, and no love; nothing but vengeance and deſtruction, and no mercy with it! The Servants of God never taſte ſo much of Hell, as when his face is hid; it brings upon them

them deſolation, terror, and the very pangs of death; but they have now and then ſome ſupport, ſome little beams of light; but in that doleful place there is nothing elſe but ſorrow and deſpair. Here, in all the temptations of his Servants, Chriſt is concerned, ſympathizes with them, and in his due time ſends them relief: But he will never concern himſelf with the Damned, nor caſt one gracious eye upon them; they are fallen, and he will not raiſe them up; they are periſh'd, and they muſt periſh; they thirſt indeed, but ſhall never have a drop of water to cool their tongues. What will the poor creatures do, when they are overwhelm'd with the wrath of one that is Almighty! Oh! how loud will be their Cries! and how dreadful their complaints, when after millions of years are paſt, they have ſtill as many more to come! When they have been long toſt upon the lake of fire, they will never be nearer to the ſhore; never hear one comfortable word from the mouth of God! Oh! how glad would they be to have one ſmile of his face, one days refreſhment! but it muſt not be; the gulph is fix'd, and the ſentence is irrevocable. Iſa. 27.11. *He that made them, will not have mercy on them; and he that formed them, will ſhew them no favour.* Oh! what can be thought more deſolate than to be forſaken of God! to be forſaken of God, in whom alone is Life, and to be caſt into outer darkneſs! And what will be the conſternation of the great day, when he ſhall ſay to the wicked, *Depart from me!* &c. To hear that voice, and that word, *Depart from me*,

will be their Hell: They ſhall not be able to turn their thoughts from the contemplation of their own miſeries, nor their eyes from the ſight of thoſe objects that will fill them with grief and horror, and be themſelves abominable; for what a deſpicable deformed thing, even now, is an Apoſtate Angel, that is ſtript of the Life of God!

Inf. 3. *If Life be in the favour of God, then the greateſt part of the World is dead*; for the moſt are alienated from him by their evil works; the moſt are ſtupid and inſenſible, in a dead ſlumber, and are his enemies. *She that liveth in pleaſure, is dead while ſhe lives*, 1 Tim. 5. 6. And if this be a ſymptom and a mark of death, How many dead have we among us! How many that find time enough for their Games, their Sports, and their Recreations, and find no time wherein to call upon the Lord, and to ſeek his favour! How many eat and drink, and are merry, even when their Souls are in the greateſt danger, and their Maker is their enemy! 'Tis a ſign, that when they are ſo little ſenſible of their greateſt intereſt, and have ſo little taſte and liking of Divine Joys, that they are ſpiritually dead. How much greater is the number of the dead than of the living! How many Families are there, that are without Prayer, without any ſenſe of God at all, and in which all the whole Family is dead! And in thoſe, where there are ſome alive, How many are there yet not quickned! How many good Parents are mourning over their dying Children whom

whom they cannot bring to life! They ſee them ſtepping into the Grave, and all their intreaties, all their Tears, all their Prayers cannot bring them thence! And in our Congregations, how many are there that have indeed *a name to live, but are dead!* that have never yet Rev. 3. 1. been in earneſt for their Salvation! that ſuffer days and years unconcernedly to rowl over their heads, and are never the nearer Heaven at the concluſion of the year, than they were at the beginning of it! They have, indeed, it may be, riſen early, and ſate up late; but all their cares have been as much for the Body, as if they had no Soul: They are grown crooked with looking downward, and are as earthly and as ſenſual, as if they had no Heaven to mind. And what an heartleſs thing is it to the Miniſters to find that they ſpend their labour in ſpeaking to the dead, and who in a great meaſure remain dead ſtill! Tho' they do it not without hope, that at ſome time or another, their Maſter will ſay to them as to the Prophet, *Ezek.* 37. 2, 3. 4, &c. Oh! what a Plague is among us, and we feel it not! Gray hairs are here and there upon us, and we diſcern it not! How many Captives has the Prince of darkneſs, that are no way grieved at their own Captivity! How many are ſtrangers to the favour of God, that never ſaw his reconciled face, never felt the quickning Influences of his Spirit to this very day! And yet rejoyce, as if all were ſafe and well! That ſit down to eat and to drink, and riſe up to play; and in the midſt of thoſe divertions Death ſeizes on their Bodies, and when their

Bodies dye, their Souls dye, and are paſt our help. Oh! my Friends, if you have any Life, any Compaſſion, put on the bowels of Chriſt, and take up a lamentation for the dead.

Inf. IV. *Why good Chriſtians are ſo willing to depart from this World.* 'Tis becauſe the favour of God is their Life; and when they are dead, they live again; becauſe they cannot ſee God and live, they are content to dye that they may enjoy the bleſſed ſight. They remember very well, that they are ſtrangers and pilgrims on earth; that Affliction is as proper to this World, as Heat in Summer, and Storms and Snow in Winter; they know how courſe ſoever their fare be, how harſh ſoever the uſage they meet withal, that they are travelling to their deareſt Countrey; and every one of thoſe Holy Pilgrims in the way to *Sion*, is continually crying out (as one ſays) after this or the like manner, "As for "thee, O City of God, how great, and how tran- "ſcendent is thy beauty! Nothing but thee do "I deſire; I think of nothing but thee; I pant, "I thirſt, I long for thy felicity. How do I "long for thee, thou ſure reverſion of never- "fading pleaſures! O! Paradiſe, thou art the "recompence of my Travels, and the ſole aim "of all my Hopes. How fain would I leave "theſe habitations of Clay, to dwell in thy "eternal and delightful Manſions! What "would I not give to enjoy the liberty of thy "Citizens! O! *Jeruſalem*, *Jeruſalem*, when "ſhall I leave this ruinous and ſhaken Houſe! "O that I had the Wings of a Dove! for "then

Situation of Paradiſe, p. 95.

" then would I fly away, and be at reſt: O!
" when, when ſhall I arrive there! How long
" will it be ere I enter the Court of Heaven!
Oh! how have many, on whom the face of God hath comfortably ſhined, long'd to depart, and to be with him? They bear all diſappointments and vexations in the hope of this; and pain and ſickneſs are welcome, becauſe they are as the wheels of their Chariots, and drive them nearer to their home. Such as theſe are like a Ship well fraighted, that is ready to Sail, and ſtays only till a favourable Wind preſent it ſelf. They dye not by ſurpriſe; for theſe happy Travellers to Glory, are always on the road that leads to the bleſſed place above; Death is not frightful to them, becauſe they have often meditated what it is to dye, and what is required for ſo vaſt a change. There are, indeed, a great many formidable things in Death, the ſeparation of the Soul, the many foregoing pains, and an innumerable Army of Sorrows and Griefs, that march before the King of Terrors; all which, by Faith, theſe holy perſons overcome; they know that Chriſt hath taken from Death, all its poyſonous and hurtful qualities. Their diſtance from God is the trouble of all good people; and when he ſhews himſelf, they rejoyce, as when he hides himſelf they mourn. And hence many a Religious Perſon, when he came to dye, has been heard to ſay, I would not now, for all the World, be without an Intereſt in Chriſt; I always found him to be a good Maſter, and I ſtill find him to be ſo; he has taken away the ſting of death, and I am

willing to go unto the Houſe prepared for all living; for my Lord hath been there before, and has perfumed and ſanctified the Grave. Thou lookeſt, O Grave, with a dreadful aſpect to Fleſh and Blood, but not ſo to Faith; and I bid thee welcome, as the way to Glory: I commit my Body to thee, to keep it ſafe till the Reſurrection, when my Soul, that I now commit into the hands of my Saviour, ſhall come and fetch it back again. With the ſenſe of this favour of God, did the Martyrs ſo chearfully perſevere, and look upon their dying day as the day of their Coronation; this Favour made them to ſcorn the threats and the frowns of Tyrants, and all their rage and fury; by this they went to the fiery furnace as to a bed of Roſes, becauſe they knew God would be with them there. In the hope of his acceptance, old and young, grave Matrons and tender Virgins have embraced the Stakes, and kiſt the Flames, and freely dyed; and have rejoiced, and look'd with an unmoved countenance on all the preparations of death, whil'ſt thoſe that were the ſpectators of their patience, could not look upom them without flowing eyes; To whom, they have ſaid, Death would be frightful, if we looked no further; but it comforts us when we ſee the Crowns, the Hallelujahs, and the Glories that wait for us on the further ſide. This will deliver us from an evil World, from our corrupt hearts, and from all thoſe ſins which we have long groaned under; this will bring us to him, whom all our days we have long'd to ſee. Our Friends bewail us here,

but

but Angels are waiting for our Souls, and will be glad to convey them to their Lord Chriſt and ours: and conformably to this, did thoſe Forty Martyrs whom *Baſil* and ſo many of the Fathers celebrate, encourage one another; when neither Promiſes nor Threats would prevail with them to forſake their God, they were condemned to be expoſed on Ice, to be kill'd with Cold; when they beheld the place, caſting away their Garments, they ran to it with delight, not as if they had been going to Death, but to gather the ſpoils of Victory: VVith our Garments, ſaid they, we ſhall put off our old man, our Sin, and all the corruptions of our Nature. VVhat great thing is it if the ſervant ſuffer that which his Lord endured before! VVe were the cauſe that he was diſrobed and afflicted; the cold, ſaid theſe happy Souls, is troubleſome, but Paradiſe is ſweet: This Ice afflicts us; but the Reſt there, will delight us: Let us endure this cold a litte while longer, and the warmth of *Abraham*'s Boſom will refreſh us for ever: VVe ſhall exchange this bitter and tempeſtuous Night, for an Eternal Day. Let us turn our backs upon the world; and ſeeing we are once to dye, Let us now Dye, that we may Live: And O Lord, let us be acceptable to thee, when we are offered to thee by this painful Death. Thus they endured in the cold night, rejoycing in the hope of Glory. VVhat wonders of courage and of zeal have been produced by the ſenſe of the Favour and the Love of God!

Inf. 5. *How inexcuſable are they that refuſe this Favour of God, in which alone is Life!* Who would chuſe to be a Beggar, when he might be the King's Favourite? Who would chuſe to embrace a Dunghill, when he might be treated with Plenty, and all ſuitable accommodations? Who would chuſe to be Sick, or Blind, when he might receive his Sight? And yet this is the ſad caſe of Sinners! God would be their friend, and they will not have him to be ſo; he would ſave them, and they will not be ſaved; he would bleſs them, and they chuſe to be curs'd. How many are there, that prefer a Luſt before a Saviour, and Earth before Heaven, and the applauſe of their vain ſottiſh Companions, before the approbation of the All-ſeeing Judge? O blind Sinners! Why will you lay hands upon your ſelves, and do all you can to deprive your Souls of Life? What a ſad thing is it, as one ſays, to deny ſuſtenance to thine own Life! The breath of God is in thee, what ſhall be done to him that ſtarveth a Prince's child? What have we of like worth to Spiritual Vigour, Agility, Courage and Peace of Soul! And ſhall we who have a door of Life, at once offer contempt to Divine goodneſs, and violence to our own Life, by not uſing what God hath put in our hands for our relief! Is there ſo much allurement in deſtruction, and ſo much Beauty in Eternal Flames, that you cannot forbear going thither! Why will you ſuffer your Souls to ſtarve, whilſt you are contriving to gratify the Fleſh? Why will you ſtill ſerve the Devil and

Symmond's *Sight and Faith.* p. 214.

and your own Sins? Are they ſo good Maſters, will they pay you ſo well in the latter end? Are you content to have the pleaſures of Sin for a ſeaſon, though you loſe your ſhare in Paradiſe? Oh what bitter reflections on ſo bad a choice will this cauſe hereafter! VVhen you ſhall lift up your Eyes in miſery, and ſee the Kingdom of Heaven afar off, and ſay, I was once offered that Kingdom and thoſe Joys, and I would not have them; I was once fair for Salvation, but I ſlighted it; I might have had the Favour of God, and I would not have it; O my curſed Sins! How you have deceived me! You promiſed me delight, and you have brought me to bitterneſs and wo; you promiſed me ſafety, and you have made me to periſh; Oh that ſome Angel, or ſome Saint, might be ſent to bring me ſome relief! The word of God told me of that Glory; his Miniſters earneſtly intreated me to prepare for it; my Friends were always bidding me to leave my wicked courſe; my Conſcience checkt me for it, and I broke through all theſe exhortations and theſe checks, and ſo am come laden with guilt, to Eternal Miſery. I was at my Games and Sports, when I ſhould have been upon my Knees: I had indeed time, and ſtrength, and health, and many helps and advantages; O that I had all my days watcht, and ſtrived, and denyed my ſelf, then I ſhould not have come to this place of Torment! O that my Sun would riſe again! O that I might have another Tryal, and more time! But alas! the Judge is my Enemy, I have heard my Sentence, and he will not change his purpoſe!

I am

I am condemned, I am loſt for ever! O Sinners! As you would never fall into ſuch a hopeleſs ſtate, now, even now, ſeek the face of God: Have you not already ſpent time enough in Sin, in walking in the imagination of your own hearts, and the ſight of your own eyes? Have you not loved your ſottiſh pleaſures long enough? O! come leave the tents of Wickedneſs, come and Love your God, for he is ready to receive you; come to him, and all your ſins ſhall be forgiven! O let not Mercy it ſelf, that ſpeaks for your hearts, be denyed: Who will be ſo good a friend as God? Who will abide with you, when life it ſelf is gone? And now ſurely, the heart of ſome ſinner or another begins to relent; ſome that is ſaying with himſelf, Though I never prayed in ſecret before, yet now I will begin to pray: Though I loſt abundance of my youth and my health, I will ſtrive to loſe no more: I have put off God and my Conſcience with vain excuſes and delays, but I will not put them off again: He ſhall have my thoughts, my heart, and my endeavours, who gave me life; and I will ever admire the riches of his Love, if he will pardon ſuch a Malefactor, and condeſcend to ſuch a Worm, and entertain ſuch a Prodigal as I have been.

Inf. 6. *In what a woful Condition are thoſe poor Sinners that are without this Favour of God!* To how great a danger are they every day expoſed! And, which is a part of their miſery, they know it not: Spiritual Death has cloſed their eyes, and they ſee not where they go. What a

ſad

ſad object is a poor ſinner, that is yet a ſtranger to this God; that is every hour liable to his Eternal Wrath; that ſeeks the Friendſhip and the Favour of men, and has no thoughts of his Creator, no dread of his Diſpleaſure, no taſte or reliſh of his Love! Surely they muſt be fallen into a dead ſleep, whom all the Terrors of the Lord, all the Threats of his Word, and all the Calls of his Miniſters will not awaken! With what peace can you eat and drink, or work, or reſt, whilſt ſo great a God is your Enemy? Will his Wrath, that makes the Devils in their Helliſh Agonies to roar and tremble, be tolerable to you? When his Vengeance purſues you, whither will you run for help? When he frowns, what will it avail you, tho all the world ſhould ſmile upon you? When he caſts you off, who will ſhew you pity? When he condemns you, who will plead your Cauſe? Do you not know that your Life is ſhort, that your Change is near, that the Judge is at the door? Do you not know that this World will leave you, that you may quickly go into another? And can you dwell with Eternal Burnings? Can you venture to go to the Judgment-Seat, before you have an Intereſt in Chriſt? Are you fruitleſs and barren here, and do you think to flouriſh in the Cœleſtial Paradiſe? Do you remain dead here under all the means of Grace, and do you hope to live for ever? What pleaſures are thoſe that enchant you, that you will not come and taſte the Joys of God? Who is that that will be a better Friend than he? If you laugh at deſtruction, it will not be the further

ther off: Oh let not the Devil be your Maſter, nor the world your God. Let not ſin cheat and impoſe upon you with its falſe and counterfeit Delights. Others are mourning in ſecret after the Lord; and have you not as much cauſe to mourn as they? Others are ſtriving with earneſt Prayers and Supplications, and holy Endeavours, to enter in at the ſtrait gate; and will it open of it ſelf to you? Or have you not alſo Souls to ſave, as well as they? Others Read, and Hear, and Pray, and do all that they can for Salvation, being afraid they ſhould fall under the Power of Eternal Death; and have you no cauſe of fear? VVhence is it, that when they are running ſo faſt in the way of Heaven, you run faſter in the way of Hell? VVhy do you with ſo great a care, tend and regard your Bodies to preſerve them from pain, and yet ſuffer your Souls to languiſh and pine away? If you did but know how miſerable you are, without the Favour of God, it would create a vaſt horror in your thoughts: How deeply would you groan, if you were but ſenſible of the vaſt load of Guilt that is upon you! How earneſtly would you cry for help, if you did but ſee whither you are ſinking, and where you are like to be for ever! How would you ſtart, if you did but perceive that the Devil flatters you, that he may deſtroy you! That it is his work you do, his Luſts that you embrace, his Deſigns that you comply withal! There is no Dungeon ſo doleful, no Place ſo full of Torment, no Fire ſo hot as that whither he leads you; and which will be more inſupportable to you, be-

cauſe

cauſe you let him lead you captive at his own pleaſure. If we receive any Life from God, let us bewail our Dead; let us pity them that have no pity for themſelves; let our eyes, and our hearts melt and be troubled for them, tho they will not ſhed any tears for the ſadneſs of their own caſe.

Inf. 7. *Hence we ſee the Reaſon why ſome grow more in Grace than others do, and are alſo more ſerviceable in the world.* Fear and ſadneſs damp and contract our Spirits, but joy and comfort dilate them, and cauſe them to act with ſpritelineſs and vigour: The Diſpleaſure of God weakens the Faculties and Powers of the Soul, by the terrible apprehenſions which it is then fill'd withal; but his favour-bringing life fills it with delight; and Faith is then ſtrong and unmov'd, when it can behold God, his Son, and the Promiſes, all as her own Portion. Love is then genuine and durable, when it has a warm ſenſe of the Love of God; and under the conſtraining power and force of this, the heart is diſſolved into a tender Sorrow, and a true Repentance: It is the ſhining of the Face of God, that makes us active for his Glory, and unwearied in his Service: And under his pleaſant and reviving Beams, the Chriſtian travels with delight and haſte to his dearly-beloved home: But when this Favour is eclips'd, this Sun covered with a cloud, then the poor Chriſtian is as one who travels in the darkneſs of the night, and has loſt his way; he is full of fear and perplexity; and ſo is the deſerted Soul; but the firſt Beam of day makes him to go on, and to finiſh his

his Courſe; and then is accompliſhed that promiſe, Iſa. 35. 1, 2. *The wilderneſs and the ſolitary place ſhall be glad, and the deſart ſhall rejoice, and bloſſom as the roſe; it ſhall bloſſom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and ſinging*, &c. The Favour of God is as dew upon the graſs, it cauſes fruit where there was nothing but withering and decay before. According as he is pleaſed to favour us, or to be diſpleaſed, ſo there is either a great Eaſe, or Reſtleſneſs and Indiſpoſition on our Spirits: His Favour excites Admiration and Praiſe, and Love and Joy; and with theſe cheerful Affections a man may do a great deal for God. Whereas, moſt uſually, with our departing Comforts, does our ſtrength depart; what can we do for the Salvation of others, if we are under great fear that we our ſelves ſhall not be ſaved? How can we work in the Vineyard, if we fear that our Maſter will in Anger caſt us out? Pſal. 51. 11. *Caſt me not away from thy preſence; and take not thy holy Spirit from me.* v. 12. *Reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation, and uphold me with thy free ſpirit.* And ſo it is, as it 1. Delivers us from thoſe Luſts and Corruptions which chain us down, that we cannot run the way of God's Commandments. 2. As it keeps us from being intangled with the affairs of the world, that ſubjugate and enthral our minds. 3. As it is in us a Spirit of Adoption, and frees us from thoſe ſlaviſh Fears of the Juſtice, and Sovereignty, and Holineſs, and Power of God, which overwhelm our hearts. *Job* 22. 26. *Then ſhalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and ſhalt lift up thy face unto God: Thou ſhalt pray unto him,*

and

and he ſhall hear thee. It gives us acceſs to the Throne of Grace; it takes off our unwillingneſs to, and our reſtraint in holy Duties; it gives a freedom and enlargement of Soul; and it is then, as the flower that opens it ſelf to the ſhining Sun. † Tho a man ſuffer no alteration in his Conſtitution, or his outward appearance, yet if God withdraw, all greatly decays within. When the Spirit came upon *Saul*, 1 Sam. 10. 6. *He propheſied, and was turned into another man.* He was inſpired with greater courage, and had a diſpoſition more Heroical, and better qualified; but when this Spirit was taken away, an evil Spirit ſucceeded in his room; then *Saul* was no more the ſame, nothing but fear, and horror, and deſpair, and vexation, raged in his breaſt; he was in all reſpects a very miſerable man; he had the name of a King, but was diveſted of all Royal Qualities, when he was left of the God of *Iſrael*, and went to ask Advice of the Witch of *Endor*; ſee his own Complaint, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15. *I am ſore diſtreſſed; for the Philiſtines make war againſt me, and God is departed from me, and anſwereth me no more, neither by prophets nor by dreams.* Does not every Chriſtian find it by his experience, that he is not the ſame in his Duties at one time, that he is at another? Sometimes his heart melts under a ſenſe of the Love of God, and he feels ſuch a vital Influence of the Spirit, that it ſeems as the Foreraſte of Heaven; he ſeems to be even ſwallowed up with Joy; he ſeems to be within the Courts of God, and to ſet his foot within the Land of Promiſe: Oh who can expreſs the

† See Mr. *Burrough's Gracious Spirit*, p. 20.

ſweetneſs that ſpreads over all the panting Soul, when it ſees the Face of God! it lives then indeed, but hardly knows whether it be in the body or out of it; ſo many wonders of Grace and Mercy does it view! And yet this ſame perſon that is now in Triumph at the Gate of Heaven, may at another time be bewailing its own caſe and in deep ſorrows, as at the very door of Hell. When the Dew of God ceaſes to fall upon it, it looks no more ſo freſh and ſo fair, but ſighs and groans for her Saviour; tho a little while ago ſhe could ſay, *I am my beloved's, and he is mine* The ſame perſon may look upon God as a Judge, that before thought him to be a Father. The Life (as one ſays) which God gives his ſervants, may be weakned; but 'tis never extinguiſh'd; there is oftentimes upon them a ſpiritual fainting, tho not a total Death: when the Spirit does not produce any chearful motion, nor diſplay any of his uſual Beams of Light; ſo that they are toſt between Fear and Hope, between the ſentiments of Life, and the apprehenſions of Death. What dryneſs, what hardneſs, comes upon our hearts? How little Life, or Enlargement, or Comfort, have we in duty, when the Spirit of God is withdrawn from us? All our endeavours, all our ſtrivings with our ſelves, do not warm our Spirits, as he uſed to do. How little delight have we in Prayer? And how loth are we to pray? And we know how lame and defective our Petitions and Deſires are: And we are at as great a loſs as *Job*, when he ſaid, *chap.* 23. 3, 4. *Oh that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even*

to

to his ſeat. And v. 8. *I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him*, &c.

Inf. 8*thly and Laſtly.* Hence you ſee the reaſon, why the Servants of God do ſo earneſtly beg this favour, and are ſo deeply troubled when it is removed: It is their life, their portion, their all: Every thing is ſtrangely changed; all its Comelineſs, and Beauty, and Glory, vaniſhes, when the Life is gone: Life is the pleaſant thing; 'tis ſweet and comfortable; but Death with its pale attendants, raiſes an horror and averſion to it every where: The Saints of God dread the removal of his favour, and the hidings of his face; and when it is hid, a faintneſs, and a cold amazement and fear ſeizes upon every part, and they feel ſtrange bitterneſs, and anguiſh, and tribulation, which makes their joints to tremble, and is to them as the very pangs of death. Pſal. 22. 14, 15. *I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midſt of my bowels; my ſtrength is dried up like a potſherd, and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou haſt brought me into the duſt of death.* Pſal. 38. 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10. And Job 23. 8, 9. Pſal. 13. 1, 3, 4. Pſal. 27. 9. *Hide not thy face from me; put not thy ſervant away in anger; thou haſt been my help, leave me not, neither forſake me, O God.* Pſal. 69. 17. *Hide not thy face from thy ſervant, for I am in trouble; hear me ſpeedily.* Pſal. 4. 6. *There be many that ſay, Who will ſhew us any good? Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.*

CHAP. III.

Shewing, that the Favour of God is diligently to be ſought; and what is to be done, that we may obtain it.

1. *SEeing in the Favour of God is Life, ſeek it earneſtly.* If I were to bid you to take care of your Lives, or your Eſtates, you would quickly think it a needleſs Requeſt, becauſe your own ſafety and intereſt would prompt you to it: but if we bid you to take care of your Souls, there indeed you can hear one Sermon after another, one Exhortation after another, and ſtill be as ſecure and careleſs as before. VVe hear many People wiſhing for other things, and very few that are deſiring this. VVe hear the Poor ſay, Oh that I were rich! The Sick, Oh that I were well! And the Priſoner ſighing for his liberty; the Trader buſily concerned for his gain; and the Merchant for good returns; but oh, how few are there that are ſaying, Oh that I might find grace in the ſight of God! Oh that I might be his, and he mine! Many have their eyes fixed upon the World, admiring and doating on it, though they daily ſee how vain it is, and how its faſhion paſſes away: but oh! how few are there whoſe eyes are fixed on Heaven? and whoſe hearts are panting after the Living God! If I could teach you a way to be the Favourites of the King, or of ſome Powerful, or Great Men, you would think to derive great Advantages

tages from ſuch a Privilege, and quickly ſtrive to get it: but here is a greater than they, even the King of kings, whoſe Favour is tendred to your acceptance, and your choice; his Throne is acceſſible; tho his Majeſty might confound you, yet his Goodneſs bids you welcome to his preſence: *Seek, and you ſhall find; knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you.* And methinks every Soul here ſhould rejoice, even to know, that it is poſſible for him to have God to be his own God. That how abject, how ſinful ſoever he may have been, yet he may be advanced and honour'd by the Lord of glory, if he do but return; and when he bids us ſeek his face, we ſhould anſwer, *Thy face Lord will we ſeek*; Pſal. 27. 8. and ſeek it preſently, while he may be found; leſt Sickneſs, and Death, and Judgment, ſhould prevent us; and leſt grieved with our delays, he ſhould cover himſelf from us by an Eternal Separation, and we ſhould ſeek him, and not find him: and becauſe we did not hear his Calls, he ſhould ſhut out all our cryes; *And laugh when our calamity comes like an armed man*; Prov. 1. 28. If you have no need of him to forgive your Sins, to heal your Souls, to protect you from danger, or to bring you to Salvation, then let this Work alone; then be unconcerned, whether you ſeek his favour, or diſeſteem it; whether he be your Friend, or your Enemy: but if you have need of God, as I am ſure you have; then pour out your ſupplications to him for his Grace; and ſay, O Lord, I have been dead in ſin, but I know that nothing is impoſſible to thee. Thou openeſt the Graves,

and makeſt even the Dead to live. Let my Soul feel thy Almighty power, and have a ſhare in the firſt Reſurrection, that over me the ſecond Death may not prevail. O let me be one of thy Children; one of thy bleſſed Family; one whom thou loveſt, and whom thou wilt love for ever: thou haſt pardoned many who were once as guilty as I have been; O magnify the Riches of thy Grace in blotting out mine Iniquities: Thou haſt quickned many that were once dead; Let me alſo be quickened by the vital influences of thy Spirit. Many Prodigals haſt thou received; Let me not be thrown off Many haſt thou bleſſed; many Bleſſings haſt thou in ſtore. *Therefore bleſs me, even me alſo, I pray thee, O my God.*

2. Joyn Endeavours to your Prayers, and uſe all the means of grace with conſcionable diligence: 2 *Cor.* 5. 9. *We labour, that whether preſent, or abſent, we may be accepted of him.* Pſal. 119. 58. Oh do not mock him with a meer form of words! but let your affections and your words be joined together: be as the Hart, that when it pants for the Waterbrooks, runs with all the ſpeed it can thither: when your Souls are once warmed with a ſenſe of God, uſe all the care you can to maintain the ſacred and the comfortable Flame, leſt by your neglect it be extinguiſh'd and go out again. For a man to wiſh that he had the favour of God, and not to uſe all his preſcribed means, is fooliſh, and ineffectual; as if a Traveller ſhould ſit in a lazy poſture, without any motion in the Road, and yet wiſh to be at his Journeys end; as if a man ſhould

ſhould wiſh to be learned, and yet never read or ſtudy: as if a Soldier ſhould wiſh for victory, and yet never fight: or an Husbandman for a gainful crop, and yet neither plow nor ſow. It is not a careleſs wiſh for God's favour, that will ſerve the turn; you muſt pray conſtantly, and reſort to thoſe places of Worſhip where he uſually manifeſts his preſence in his own Ordinances; and read his word with reverence, humility and frequency; you muſt ſeek him with your whole heart; you muſt expect and wait, tho it be long, for a gracious anſwer of your Prayers: how many days will men give their attendance for ſome Preferment, or High Place, in a Prince's Court! And it ſhould not grieve us to ſtay for the Favour, and the Love of God; for when it is once beſtowed, it will requite all your pains and labour; 1 *Cor.* 15. laſt verſe. You will meet in the queſt of this, with manifold trials, and with great oppoſitions; your Carnal Nature, and your old Sins will preſent motives to your ſenſe to draw you back. *Satan* will perplex you with a thouſand doubts and troubles; for you may be ſure this Lyon will roar, when he is like to loſe his Prey: but nothing of this muſt diſcourage you. The Favour of God is ſo great a mercy, that you may juſtly be importunate and reſtleſs till you get it, notwithſtanding all the dangers that you meet withal. No great things are obtained, but with difficulty: you'll ſee hereafter, that it was worth the while to take pains in a matter of ſo great conſequence. You now find, that after all the pleaſure of Sin is paſt, it leaves a ſting, and fills

your minds with bitterneſs and trouble; but you'll hereafter find nothing but comfort, nothing but an overflowing-pleaſure in the love of God: and you'll find it to be ſo very pleaſant, that you will wiſh that you had done more for him than you have done. There's not a Soul in Heaven that repents of the pains he took to get thither.

3. *You muſt be deeply ſenſible of your own miſerable and undone ſtate without it.* Luke 5. 31. *They that are whole, need not a Phyſician, but they that are ſick.* Matth. 18. 11. *The Son of Man is come to ſave that which is loſt.* Job 33. 27. *He looketh upon men; and if any ſay, I have ſinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profiteth me not; he will deliver his ſoul from going down to the pit, and his life ſhall ſee the light.* If you are once convinced, that your ſins have made him angry; that his Anger is very juſt; and yet ſo ſevere, that if it continue, it will be intolerable. If you are once ſenſible what a great God you have provoked; what an holy Law you have broken; what an Hell you have deſerved; you will reckon it as a great mercy that you are not already there, whence there is no return. If your Conſcience have been awakened with a deep impreſſion of his Wrath, all the Riches, the Honours, and the Pleaſures of this World, will ſeem to you to be very poor and empty things. The ſight of Sin that has deceived you, that has defiled you, that has expoſed you to ſo great danger, will fill you with ſhame and ſorrow, with fear and trouble. Of all your deſires, this will be your chief, and your only deſire;

ſire; Let me have the Favour of God, whatever elſe I want: Let me have his Favour, or I dye for ever: you will be reſtleſs and unſatisfied till you have the hope of this. The reaſon why men are ſo induſtrious for all other things, and ſo little concerned for the Favour of God, is, becauſe they are blinded by the Devil, and their own Luſts, and under a ſpiritual inſenſibility. But if you once find Sin to be bitter, this will be very ſweet: If that has thrown you into painful Agonies, and deep diſtreſs of Soul, this will greatly comfort and revive you: you will ſee then great cauſe to humble, and to loath your ſelf; and not find any cauſe of pride, or of the boaſt of the *Phariſee*; but in the better poſture and temper of the *Publican*, ſay, *Lord be merciful to me a ſinner.* Never did a Traveller, after a tedious Journey, more deſire his home; or a Mariner, long toſt with Tempeſts, to ſee the quiet Shore, than you will deſire this Favour of God. When you have been ſcorcht with inward thirſt, you will pant for this Fountain of Love, wherein you may quench your thirſt; when you have been in a long war with God, and come at length to ſee the danger of it; Oh how beautiful will be the feet of thoſe who are Ambaſſadors of Peace! You will then ſay, as it is in *Luke* 1.53. *He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath ſent empty away.*

4. *The Favour of God is only to be had in, and through Jeſus Chriſt; and you muſt apply your ſelves to him for it.* It is not all your Zeal, your Repentance, your Self-denial, or your Mortifications, that of themſelves will be ſufficient to bring

bring you to the Favour of God: Tho you labour in his Service all the day, and mourn for your Miſcarriages all the night, what ſatisfaction will this give to his offended Juſtice, and to the honour of his violated Law? We were happy indeed at our firſt Creation, in his Love; and happy had we been ſtill, had we perſevered: but our firſt Apoſtacy, by the fall from that Innocent Condition, has made a large breach between God and us; and there is none found in Heaven, or in Earth, that can make it up, but his only Son. The loſs of Original Righteouſneſs has made us to loſe his Favour, and occaſioned a vaſt diſtance between him and us; this has brought forth all the miſeries of the World: Irregular Seaſons, overflowing Inundations, and dreadful Wars; all the ſickneſs and pain of our Bodies, and all the guilt, and unquietneſs, and diſorder of our Souls: in *Adam* we all died; both natural and ſpiritual death came upon all, becauſe all have ſinned; but God has in his mercy not left us hopeleſs. As ſoon as *Adam* fell, He was pleaſed to provide for his riſing again, and as ſoon as ever he had wounded himſelf, he did prepare a Balſom to heal and cure his Wounds; and when he was ſtung, and poiſoned with the Venom of the Serpent, he did prepare an Antidote. The poor guilty Creature could have expected nothing but a Curſe, and yet God gave him the Promiſe of Redemption, and of a Bleſſing by the Seed of the Woman that ſhould break the Serpent's head: when he drive *Adam* out of Paradiſe, he might have put him out of Heaven, and out of his Preſence

for

for evermore; and have ſaid, Go and dwell with that Devil that tempted thee to ſin. Upon the Fall, he withdrew indeed his uſual Favour; this raiſed a cloud that obſcured the beauty of his morning-glory, and that intercepted the beams that a little while before ſhone upon his head: but tho we had deſtroyed our ſelves, in God was our help: He ſent his own Son to dye for us, to give a ſatisfaction to his Juſtice, which would otherwiſe have flamed againſt us: and *though we are enemies, yet he is willing to reconcile us by the death of his Son*; Rom. 5. 10. It is by him that he will treat with us; to him muſt we addreſs our ſelves; as being ordain'd of God to make our peace: To his Righteouſneſs muſt we look, as being very ſenſible, that our own at the beſt is miſerably defective: If our Perſons, and our Services be accepted, it muſt be through his Beloved; he is the Principal, and the great Favourite of Heaven: all the mercy that we need, will be beſtowed for his ſake alone; all the miſeries that we deſerve, will he keep from us: it pleaſes God to behold what Chriſt has done; he will be pleaſed with us, if we are in him. It is the Blood of Jeſus, and the merit of his Death, and our application of theſe by faith, that will reinſtate us in his Favour: and 'tis the power and the virtue of his Interceſſion that will preſerve us in it. Chriſt is *the way, and the truth, and the life*; 'tis he that will conduct and lead us to his Father; and make him that was our Enemy, becauſe of our Sin, to be our Friend again. It is his Office, as a Mediator, and a Saviour,

Saviour, to heal the Wounded, to reduce the Wanderers, to call home the baniſhed, to make the Lame to walk, and the blind to ſee; *Iſa.* 61. 1. and our bleſſed Lord is willing to plead our Cauſe, and to help our Wants; for thoſe that come unto him, he will in no-wiſe caſt out, if you believe, his Father ſhall be your Father; and his God your God: for God has reſolved, that all the communication of his Grace ſhall be made through his dearly beloved Son; and if you do ſincerely beg his Favour for Chriſt's ſake, you ſhall not be denied: *He that hath the Son, hath life.* You ſhall indeed flouriſh, when you are united to this great and glorious Head; and the death that you found by the firſt, ſhall be removed by the ſecond *Adam*: *As in Adam all died, even ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive*; 1 Cor. 1. 22. The Office of our Redeemer in Heaven is ſtill to be a Reconciler; and not all the Angels, or the Saints there, can do for us what he does. When you are complaining of the yet remaining defilement and power of Sin, and ſaying with the great Apoſtle, *Oh wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* Then remember that there is help laid upon one that is mighty; one that is compaſſionate, and hath a tender ſenſe of all your griefs and miſeries; and therefore when you are amazed with the view of your own guilt, terrified with the Accuſations of your own Conſciences, and perplext with the violent Aſſaults and Temptations of the Devil; when you are afraid you ſhall be the Stubble to the devouring Wrath of God, then lay hold of

his

his ſtrength, *Iſa.* 27. 5. i. e. *on Chriſt who is the power of God, and the wiſdom of God*, 1 Cor. 1. 24. And it may be ſaid of you, as in *Epheſ.* 2. 12. *Though in time paſt ye were without Chriſt, being aliens from the commonwealth of Iſrael, and ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe, having no hope, and without God in the World: but now in Chriſt Jeſus, you who ſometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Chriſt; for he is our peace.*

5. *That you may have an intereſt in the favour of God, which is Life, your natures muſt be renewed.* It is not enough that your Conſciences are delivered from guilt, and from an obnoxiouſneſs to puniſhment; but they muſt alſo be delivered from the dominion and the power of ſin. If your Luſts are unſubdued, they will by their unquiet and diſorderly motions create an Hell within, and then you cannot expect an Heaven without; if you reliſh only temporary, carnal joys, you muſt not expect to taſte the Joy of God; nor think, that if you will wallow in the mire, that he will place you on his Throne. Tho' his Sun gives refreſhment with his chearful beams to all the World, to the bad as well as to the good; yet the beams of his ſpecial favour will not ſhine upon a Dunghil, nor viſit thoſe hearts which are full of all manner of pollution: his pure and holy nature will not allow him to behold iniquity with approbation. Think not to ſee the reviving ſmiles of his face, ſo long as you turn your backs upon him, ſo long as you love what he abhors; ſo long as without any remorſe or grief, you ſcorn his Government,

vernment, and violate his Laws. Till you are born again by the Spirit of God, you are in a ſtate of death, and are unfit for the communications of the Divine favour. You are in that condition, no members of the Body of Chriſt; for all that are joyned to that glorious Head, have life and ſtrength from him to mortify their Luſts. *What fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with unrighteouſneſs? and what communion hath light with darkneſs? and what concord hath Chriſt with Belial?* 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15. There is no Communion between God and you till your natures, your inclinations, your principles, your deſigns are all changed from what they once were. *The righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs*, Pſal 11.7. Till you have his image, and a reſemblance of him wrought in you by the Holy Ghoſt, you are not his favourites, nor ſuch in whom he can take a peculiar delight; without holineſs, his preſence will not ſeem amiable to you; or at leaſt without it, you cannot ſee his face. Iſa. 59. 1, 2. *Your iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God; and your ſins have hid his face from you.* And therefore they are compared to a thick Cloud, they obſtruct and dim the light that otherwiſe would ſhine upon your heads. Therefore *David* prays, *Create in me a clean heart*; and then, *reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation*, Pſal. 51. 10, 12. Whil'ſt ſin is lodged and entertained in the ſoul, it is like wind in the bowels of the Earth, it will cauſe Convulſions and troubleſome agitations there. It was the ſin of *Adam* that made ſo many frowns in the face of God; that cauſed the

the firſt eruption of his Wrath; that makes it ſo frequently to flame out with terror againſt the guilty Sons of Men. Till you are born again, you will have an averſion to God; And how can you expect that his favour ſhould be given to you, whileſt you care not to think of him? Till your darkneſs be removed, and you be acquainted with him, you cannot be at peace.

VI. That you may have the favour of God, you muſt in conformity to the new Nature, and thoſe holy diſpoſitions that you receive by his Grace, yield him a ſincere and a conſtant obedience all your lives. *His countenance doth behold the upright*, Pſalm. 11. 7. He encourages the weakneſs of that Soul that is tender and afraid of ſin; he will not treat you with the kindneſs that he ſhews to his honourable Subjects, if you take part with his open enemies: *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatſoever I command you*, Joh. 15. 14. Obedience is the genuine effect of ſo excellent and ſo near an alliance; and 'tis the proof and evidence thereof. Joh. 14. 21. *He that hath my Commandments and doth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me, ſhall be loved of my father, and I will love him.* And *verſ.* 23. *We will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* A Promiſe full of Mercy! Words that have in them all that is deſirable, that are big with conſolation! What can a ſoul wiſh for more, than to have God, the Father and the Son, to have them for his Friends, for his Gueſts! and not only to tarry for a night or a day, but for ever! Not to comfort

fort him with a tranſient viſit, which were a great privilege; but to dwell with him! Oh! bleſſed is the Houſe that hath ſuch Inhabitants; and bleſſed is the Soul who is thus honoured and eſteemed. By obeying his Commands, you ſhew your ſelves to be veſſels of Honour; and when you are ſo, he will at one time or other fill you brim-full of Joy. If you ſerve the Devil, you can by no means have that ſatisfaction that flows from the hope of being a Son of God, and an Heir of Heaven: And tho' his Showers fall upon the Sands, as well as on the manured and cultivated ground; yet till you are fruitful, you cannot expect to be refreſh'd with his gentle and comfortable Dews. There are peculiar influences of his Grace that fall upon his incloſed Gardens, and not upon the Deſerts. *If favour ſhould be ſhewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteouſneſs*, Iſa. 26. 10. It ſhines like the Sun on a Rock; he is no more fruitful, no more tender-hearted than he was before; if you embrace your ancient Sins, if you hold on your correſpondence with your former Luſts, God will not pour the oyl of gladneſs into ſuch old and depraved hearts; if we go on in ſin, we violate our own ſerenity, and raiſe within our breaſts a multitude of ſtorms; whereas, Pſal. 119. 165. *Great peace have they which love thy Law, and nothing ſhall offend them.* And ſo, *Gal.* 6. 16. *As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy.* Iſa. 64. 15. *Thou meeteſt him that rejoyceth and worketh righteouſneſs.* By theſe means you ſhall obtain the favour of God, and when you have ſo obtained it;

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing that we ought to take heed that we do not loſe the favour of God after we have once enjoyed it; and what we are to do, that we may not fall into a condition ſo miſerable as this would be.

7. *TAke great heed that you do not loſe the favour of God again.* It is true indeed, that thoſe whom God once loves, he loves to the end; they are not ſuffered totally to be miſerable; but yet they may loſe the ſenſe of his favour, and all the comfort that once flowed from the pleaſant thought, That he was their God. Thoſe that have ſailed with a very proſperous gale, may, upon their negligence, be toſt with very many ſtorms, and may be terrified with a Thouſand dangers and calamities, whileſt they do not ſee the Sun, Moon and Stars for many days and nights together; and tho' they do not at length fall ſhort of Heaven, yet they may travel as through a Wilderneſs in their way thither, and not meet with thoſe cluſters of the promiſed Land, with thoſe joys and comforts that others meet withal. The Spirit may ſuſpend his influences, and leave the Conſcience in a very lamentable ſtate, and take away the peace that he once gave; ſo that the poor ſoul in that condition, cannot but look upon it ſelf with as ſad an eye as if it were a reprobate; and great difficulties and dangers there are ere

the ſpirit return again to repair the breaches which our ſin hath made. The diſorders of our ſouls afterwards remain a great while, and it will coſt us vaſt labour to remove them; as when ſome River that is very muddy has overflowed the neighbouring Fields, tho' it do return to its ordinary Channel, yet it nevertheleſs leaves thoſe places all covered with ſlime and dirt. The leaſt Eclipſe of the Face of God is a very formidable thing, 'twill ſhake all the powers of your ſouls, and put you into ſuch terror as will ſeem to be like Hell it ſelf. If you be ſo fooliſh, as upon ſlight temptations to forfeit his favour, you'll dearly pay for that folly; you may do that in a moment, that may fill you with aſtoniſhment and ſorrows all your days, and make you go at laſt mourning to the Grave. You may by a ſudden fall have your Bones broken, and it may be, never again recover your former eaſe and ſtrength; do not therefore wound nor bruiſe your ſelves. If you are not very careful, that Candle of the Lord that ſhines upon your Tabernacle, may be removed, and then you'l know by a ſad experience, that it is an evil and a bitter thing to ſin againſt him. Tho' you now do not queſtion your title to Salvation, yet you ſhall then be full of doubts and fears; tho' you are now looking to God as to a Friend, yet you ſhall then be forced to look upon him as an Enemy; and think your afflictions, not the rebukes of a Father, but of an angry Judge. He will be indeed the ſame God ſtill, as full of Goodneſs and of Love; but to you he will be as a Fountain

tain ſealed up, and your poor mourning ſouls, like the Mountains of *Gilboa*, curſt and barren, there will be no Dew nor Rain upon them. Tho' you are never ſo flouriſhing now, yet then the ſharpneſs of the Winter will blaſt all your Fruit, that the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall there be any fruit in the Vine, and the labour of the Olive ſhall fail. Conſider how great was the ſorrow of *David*, when God was for a ſeaſon departed from him! How many were his Tears, how heavy his Complaints, and how ſad his Thoughts! Tho' he was (as 'tis uſually judged) of a ſanguine and a merry temper, and had a peculiar skill in Muſick, which is the uſual allayer and charm of Grief; yet in the ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure, his Joy was turned into Lamentation, his Harp and thoſe Songs with which he had driven away the melancholly of *Saul*, could not ſtifle or chaſe away trouble from his own ſoul; the Storm was too loud to liſten to thoſe ſofter Airs; the Wound was too deep to be Cured by thoſe gentle and eaſie Methods. Beware leſt you loſe the ſenſe of the Favour and the Love of God; leſt you make your Heavenly Father to viſit you with painful Rods, and ſevere Afflictions. Take heed that you do not weaken your ſelves; *for the joy of the Lord is your ſtrength*, Neh. 8. 10. Is it not motive enough to ſay, that his Favour is your Life, and his Diſpleaſure is your Death? Let us but take as much pains for our ſpiritual, as for our natural Life, and all will be very well. When we find the leaſt decays of Nature, we are very induſtrious

to repair them; when we find the leaſt faintneſs or indiſpoſition on our ſpirits, we have recourſe to Cordials, or to ſomething that is very comfortable and reviving, to refreſh them; when we are ſick, we complain of our illneſs, we make abundance of inquiries, and uſe a great deal of care to know what it is that will do us good; we have a great value for our dear Life, and are afraid of every thing that may deprive us of it; and when we are in Health, What do we not attempt for our own preſervation! What Arts do we uſe! What proviſions do we make for Meat, and Drink, and Cloaths, and Houſes, and Gardens, and other accommodations, that we may live at eaſe! And (my Friends) is not our Soul of more worth than the Body? Are not its decays, and its death, more painful, and more intollerable than all the languiſhing and decays of our outward Man? Let us therefore, as we have a great horror of natural death, have no leſs for that which is ſpiritual: Let us keep, with a greater care, the Favour of God, that is our Spiritual and Eternal Life. And that we may not loſe it,

1. *Let us not grieve his Holy Spirit*, Epheſ. 4. 30. Tho' we are not ſo happy, as to have a familiar Converſation with Chriſt, as thoſe had who enjoyed his preſence here on Earth, tho' he be withdrawn from our eyes, and we ſee him not in his exalted and glorified ſtate; yet he has ſent his Spirit to dwell in our hearts, and we ought, with all manner of obedience and reſpect, to treat and entertain ſo Divine a Gueſt;

to

to do nothing that is unſuitable to ſo great a Preſence; not to pollute our ſelves, nor to defile his Temple with any ſort of ſin, leſt we grieve and vex him. The Divine Nature, indeed, is incapable of our paſſions, 'tis above our joys and our ſorrows; and as 'tis ſaid of thoſe that are upon Mount *Olympus*, they ſee the Clouds gather below their feet, they ſee the Hail and the Thunder diſturb and lighten on the Plain, whileſt they rejoice in the pure light of the Sun: In ſuch manner the Divine Eſſence ſees all the troubles and agitations of the Creatures, remaining always in its own peace and tranquility. * This expreſſion is borrowed from humane affections; and when the Holy Spirit does that in us, which our nature does when it is ſeized with ſorrow, then he is ſaid to be grieved: And if we make him ſad, we cannot expect that he will make us to rejoyce; if we affront and abuſe him, he will not be our comfort; if he retire, all our Evidences will be covered with darkneſs, and we ſhall be plunged in the loweſt depths. Let us therefore obey all his ſuggeſtions; whatever he bids us do, let us do; let our minds always be yielding to his good, and profitable motions; let us not ſlight the Revelation he hath made, nor be unmindful to grow in all the Graces that are pleaſing to him; let us remember the kindneſs that he does us; how he chaſes away our darkneſs; and when we are fainting, how ſeaſonably he does apply the Promiſes, and brings to our remembrance thoſe Truths that are moſt ſuitable and refreſhing to us; let us not

* Claude *Serm. Sur.* Eph. 4. 30. P. 29.

grieve him, by neglecting to read or meditate upon the Word which he endited; or by fooliſh Communications, by raſh Angers, or Malice, or Bitterneſs, or Wrath, or Contention, *Epheſ.* 4. 31. but let him be the abſolute Maſter of our ſouls; when we are afflicted, let us not grieve him by our murmuring or impatient complaints in our afflictions; nor by ſecurity and hardneſs of heart in our proſperity: And when he would carry us towards Heaven on the wings of ſpiritual deſire and love, let us not ſuffer our ſelves to be ſeduced by the World, the Devil, or the Fleſh; and if we obey him, he will maintain a ſenſe of the Divine Favour on our ſouls; and the Life that he will give us, will not be like that of the ſick, the feeble, and the dying; but like the Life of the moſt ſtrong and healthful.

2. *Let us beware of Spiritual pride:* The contrite and humble are thoſe that he regards: The proud he looks upon afar off, *Pſal.* 138. 6. *Though the Lord be high, yet hath he reſpect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off.* That is, with diſdain and ſcorn. 'Tis nothing but our ignorance that makes us Proud: We are ignorant of God, and of the multitude and greatneſs of our Sins; were it poſſible for us to be Proud, if we frequently conſidered the Great Majeſty of God, and our own Vileneſs! His Holineſs, and our Pollution! His Almighty Power, and our Weakneſs! His Glory, and our Darkneſs! His Eternity, and our own fading being! What compariſon can be made between the Great Ruler of the World, and us

that

that dwell in houſes of clay? It was a mighty Condeſcention in our Bleſſed Lord, and one of the chiefeſt parts of his Humiliation; to be cloathed with our Nature, that is in it ſelf ſo mean and low: And as one ſays, "The whole "World, from Eaſt to VVeſt, lies very ſick; "but to cure this very ſick world, there de- "ſcends an Omnipotent Phyſician, who hum- "bled himſelf, even to the aſſumption of a "Mortal Body, as if he had gone into the Bed "of the diſeaſed. 'Tis an Ignorance of our ſelves, that is the cauſe of our Pride; we remember not, how often it is that we offend in Thought, VVord, and Deed: How we are by Nature children of wrath! And how we make our ſelves more ſo, by repeated acts of Sin. God reſiſts the Proud, but he hath a regard to the Contrite and Humble Soul; Iſa. *He fills the hungry with good things, but the rich he ſends empty away*, Luke 1. 53. All on whom he beſtows his Favour, he firſt convinces of their own miſery; ſhews to them the Curſe, the Hell, the Condemnation that they have deſerved: and when they are pardoned after ſuch a ſight, that Pardon fills them with low, and ſelf-abaſing thoughts; and when he comes to embrace them, he finds them in the poſture of the poor Prodigal, *Luke* 15. 18, 19. *Father, I have ſinned againſt heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy ſon.* One ſight of the face of God will daſh all our Confidence, and lower all our Pride; and the more this is revealed, and diſcovered to the Souls of the Faithful, the more they ſee cauſe to loath and abhor themſelves in

duſt and aſhes. Hence it is that our Apoſtle that knew ſo much of God, was ſo very humble; ſaying, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. *By the grace of God I am what I am— I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.* He calls himſelf the chief of Sinners, and admires the *grace of our Lord*, that *towards him was exceeding abundant*; 1 Tim. 1 14. And elſewhere he ſtyles the mercies of the Goſpel, the *exceeding riches of the grace of Chriſt*, Eph. 2. 7. As ever you would have the favour of God continued, ſtrive againſt all pride. A man is then proud, 1. When he attributes that to himſelf, to his own Induſtry, Wiſdom or Prudence, which he hath received from God. 2. When he attributes to, or expects that by merit, which is a free gift. Or, 3. When he thinks he hath that which he hath not. Or, 4. When he deſpiſes others, and affects preheminence. It is uſual with us to take the meaſures of Pride from the garb or attire, from the outward behaviour, geſture, or the uſe of ſome leſs grave or decent Faſhions; and indeed there may be an exceſs in theſe things that may be very juſtly blameable: But, my Friends, there is a Pride worſe than all this, even ſpiritual Pride, that hath in it the very Image of the Apoſtate Spirit, and is truly Diabolical; when a man is proud of the Graces, or the Gifts of God, it alienates from him the Divine Favour, for which we are more prepared, when we are covered with ſhame and ſorrow: And when we are poor in ſpirit, then we may hope that he will enrich us with his Love. When we are emptied of all Self-conceit,

or

or a flattering opinion of our own Actions, then we may hope that he will fill us both with grace and glory. VVhat a ſorry unbecoming thing is it for a man, even the beſt of men, to be proud! Alas! How ſoon can the Great God cauſe all his glory to wither, and to fade away! What a vain thing is it for a man to pride himſelf in things that relate to the Body, when it is liable to Agues, Fevers, Conſumptions, Convulſions, and many tedious days and years of pining ſickneſs, and muſt at laſt be the prey of death, and moulder in the Grave! And it is no leſs evil and fooliſh for a man to pride himſelf in any thing that relates to his Soul; in his knowledge, in his faith, in his ſerviceableneſs; for upon his ſin, an hour of temptation may come upon him, that will be an hour of darkneſs, that will cauſe the light of all theſe to vaniſh; and what is man, when his Conſcience is awakened with a ſenſe of guilt, when his Sins are ſet in order before him, when the Devil is permitted to ſift and vex him, to ruffle him with amazing Terrors, and the conſtant view of Hell? If God depart from us, that Envious raging Spirit, who is of great power and malice, does with eaſe inſult over us, and tread us under his feet. Oh! how vain is it for us to be proud, that live a miſerable life, and may dye a very painful death! All the Deſigns of God are to exalt himſelf, and abaſe the Creature. The Conſciouſneſs that the Saints have of their own Unworthineſs, will produce an eternal admiration of his Love; and they will all caſt down their Crowns before the Throne;

1 *Cor.* 4. 7. *Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what haſt thou that thou didſt not receive?* 1 Pet. 5. 5, 6.

3. *That you may not loſe the Favour of God, you muſt beware of formality, and all ſlightneſs of ſpirit in the performance of holy duties:* It will be alſo very prejudicial to us, when we can omit them, and have no great trouble or regret for ſo great a Sin. Whereas, if we were duly tender of the welfare of our Souls, we ſhould refreſh them with frequent thoughts and meditations, as we do our Bodies, with two or three meals a-day. When we bring dead Sacrifices to the Altar of God, we need not wonder that we have ſo little ſpiritual and heavenly life; we need not wonder that we have no more ſenſe of his Favour, when we often pray for it, as if we prayed not; the coldneſs and indifference of our Petitions ſhews, that we do not much care whether they be granted or denyed: and God will not thruſt his Mercies upon us whether we will or not; none ſhall enjoy his gracious comfortable Preſence, but thoſe that ſtrive and wreſtle; and ſuch as have the zeal of *Jacob*, that will not let him go till he bleſs them. Heaven and Salvation we would all have, but God knows we beg it after a very poor faſhion; and he may juſtly expel us from the ſight of himſelf, becauſe we draw near to him with ſo little fervour; and give him cauſe to complain of us, as of thoſe in *Iſa.* 29. 13. We are guilty of ſlightneſs and formality in duty in theſe following Inſtances: 1. When we perform them as a task, and not with delight and love. 2. When we

do

do not excite and ſtir up our ſelves to call upon the Lord. 3. When we are ſatisfied in the bare outward performance, and have not thoſe inward exerciſes of contrition, faith, and holy ſorrow, and vigorous deſires, which are as the life and the ſoul of Prayer. 4. When we ſuffer our Thoughts to wander, or when we run to ſuch Duties from a hurry, and a croud of worldly buſineſs, not conſidering the greatneſs of our wants, and of that Majeſty that fills the Throne before which we pray, and how he will be ſanctified of all that draw nigh to him. 5. When we look not for the anſwer of our Prayers; and when having done our duty, we are unſollicitous whether it produce any good effect or no. 6. When we are more ſtudious to approve our ſelves to the eyes of Men, than to the eye of God. I might add, That if we would not loſe the Favour of God, we muſt duly improve all his other Ordinances; we muſt hear as for our lives, and take heed that his word do not at any time ſlip out of our minds. We muſt receive the glad tidings of Salvation with obedient and joyful hearts: and upon all fit occaſions, in the Celebration of the Lord's Supper, with holy Affections, and a melting zeal, keep up the remembrance of the Love of Chriſt till he come again; and with great conſtancy and ſeriouſneſs read the Scriptures that direct us how to obtain this Favour of God that is our life: but if any perſon has ſo little value for the Favour of God, that he will not earneſtly pray for it, he muſt go without it; and ſmart for his refuſal of ſo excellent a Bleſſing, when it ſhall be too late to repent.

IV. *That*

4. *That you may not loſe the Favour of God that is your life, you muſt avoid all ſloth.* What pains hath God taken, what Exhortations, what Promiſes has he uſed to bring you near to himſelf? what hardſhips and ſufferings did Chriſt undergo to gain your love? and will you do nothing in anſwer to that Favour of his that is ſo graciouſly beſtowed, and ſo dearly bought? Be circumſpect, and walk cloſely with your God; beware of every thing that may ſtir up your Father's Anger; for though he will not throw off ſo kind a Relation, yet his Wrath is very terrible. I beſeech you to be very fearful of all inward backſlidings, and of ſpiritual decays: and leſt the warmth of your firſt burning love to God wear away again, take heed leſt the death that is in his diſpleaſure, ſteal upon you by degrees; and leſt from a leſs degree of zeal there come a total indiſpoſition on your hearts; for when you once begin to ſlide, the deſcent is eaſie: as ſoon as ever you are ſleepy, rouſe your ſelves by thoſe powerful motives that you may fetch from the Word of God, from his Promiſes, and from his Threats; ſlothful Servants will never have their Maſter's Approbation; you have good encouragement, manifold aſſiſtances, and the proſpect of a great reward. Is your Joy, your Peace, your preſent Conſolation, and your Hope, nothing worth? if it be, then let no Dangers, no Difficulties whatſoever make you to part with it; as knowing that it may coſt you dear before you obtain it, if it once be loſt. Take heed that you do not begin to loſe your awful ſenſe of God, that

you

you do not grow bold with ſin; take heed that you comply not with the Devil; who being forſaken of God, would have you to be ſo; and who being ſhut out of Heaven, would hinder your arrival there, or at leaſt make you to go uncomfortably thither: if he cannot hinder your walking towards that *Jeruſalem*, he will endeavour to make you halt, and to go with pain thither. But to prevent this, and all other his malicious Deſigns, be you *fervent in the ſpirit, ſerving the Lord:* And upon his firſt withdrawing, be you reſtleſs till you find him whom your Souls love. As you now flouriſh in the Courts of God, take heed that you do not blaſt your own Fruit: ſeeing you are fixed on the Rock of Ages, take heed that you do not pull up your own Anchor, and ſo your Veſſel be driven on the Sands, and your hope ſhipwrackt. Make no excuſes for your not working hard; uſe no delays; apply your ſelves to the moſt active and zealous endeavours, that ſo you may prevent your own ſorrow: *For the field of the ſluggard will be all grown over with thorns, and nettles will cover the face thereof, and the ſtone-wall thereof will be broken down*, Prov. 24. 31. Theſe Thorns are evil deſires that will ſpring up of their own accord without ſowing, they will encreaſe of themſelves; and then you will be expoſed without defence to every Invader, and to all the Birds of prey: and conſider, 'That (as one ſays *) the 'Duties of godlineſs are not only a debt to God, 'but a reward to us; and in our ſloth there is 'not unfaithfulneſs only, but ingratitude; both 'the Majeſty and the Mercy of God is deſpited:

* Symmond's *Deſerted Soul*, p. 523.

Re-

Remember what the Church ſaith, *Cant.* 3. 1. *By night, on my bed, I ſought him whom my ſoul loveth; I ſought him, but I found him not*, &c. She did not find him, for ſhe ſought amiſs; no wonder ſhe was not bleſſed with his preſence, when ſhe ſought it in ſuch a lazy manner; and therefore tho' ſhe took pains afterwards, yet ſhe did not meet with him: He chaſtiſed her former negligence with a longer abſence, tho' there was no place which ſhe did not frequent, no perſon of whom ſhe did not ask, and yet heard no tidings of him; He that ſuffered on the Croſs for her, might juſtly expect that ſhe ſhould leave her Bed and quit her eaſe for him, *Cant.* 5. from *v.* 2, to 9.

5. *That you may not loſe the favour of God, which is your Life, take heed of an inordinate affection to this World, and ſenſual Delights:* If the care and buſineſs, the riches and projects of this World, take up your hearts, and the flower of your time, you will have but few thoughts of him, and conſequently but a little Love; the more you advance in the mortification of your Appetites, and your deareſt Luſts, the more chearful influences you'l find of his Grace. Beware that you love not any thing in this World too much; no Child, no Relation, no Creature-Comfort, leſt he tear away theſe Idols from you, and the loſs of an over-prized enjoyment vex your ſouls: He will have your whole hearts, and you muſt not think that he will ſhew you his favour, if you only give him one half, and ſhare the other amongſt the ſeveral objects that your miſtaken affections doat upon.

upon. If you prize this favour of God, as you ought, you'l not too vehemently desire any present good, nor too sorrowfully bewail its departure from you; your Life will be in God, and not bound up in any of your Friends, lest when they dye, your peace and comfort dye at the same time. If the World be set upon the Throne, the disorder that is thereby offered to God, will cause him to frown, and to fetch the Rebel and Usurper thence, tho' with your smart and grief. Sensual pleasures will clog and vitiate your appetite, that you shall not so well taste, nor apprehend the sweetness that there is in God; if you have seen his face, the beauties and the glories of it will make all the World appear to you as a mean and despicable thing; as the Woman that was clothed with the Sun, had the Moon under her feet: You will see such an attractive excellence in Christ, that you will esteem him as *the chief of ten thousands*; and the tempting, fair-spoken World, will not be able to lead Captive that heart, which you have already given to a better Lord; and whilest others feed upon Husks, you will be treated with the Bread of your Father's House; whilest others pursue the drossy, short-liv'd pleasures of sense, you will have the delights of Angels, and of an Eternal Heaven to feed upon; and your splendid satisfaction, will keep you from envying them, whose ignorance makes them to be content with lower fare; and who, when they might fly as with the Wings of Eagles, chuse to grovel in the dust; and as the Moon then is Eclipsed, when the Earth

Earth ſhadows it, and hinders its admiſſion of the light of the Sun that makes it viſible; and as in ſuch an Eclipſe, the nearer that Planet is to the Earth, the more durable is its darkneſs; ſo if we ſuffer an Eclipſe of God's Favour, it is when this Earth interpoſes between him and us; when its falſe allurements and promiſes turn our Eyes downward, which ſhould be always lifted up to that glorious Sun by whoſe light we ſee. This World is a more dangerous Enemy than we uſually take it to be; and therefore the Apoſtle ſays, *If any man love it, the love of the father is not in him*, 1 Joh. 2. 15. Its Joys are like thoſe falſe Fires that wander up and down in a thick and foggy night, and which lead the deceived Traveller into ſome Pit or Gulf; but the Joys of God are like the brightneſs of a Summers day; their clearneſs, their comfortableneſs, and their continuance, render them worthy of our higheſt admiration. The ſmiles of the World, many times, cover a deſigned miſchief; but the ſmiles of God are to make us happy. Whether then ſhall we moſt prize, the Fountain, or the polluted Streams? the rich Ocean, or the ſmaller Brooks? Why ſhould we love the Creatures, when we have a God to love? Why ſhould we doat upon a Bubble, that every little Storm blows away, and not embrace that Salvation that is offered? and that is both ſuitable to our faculties, and not liable to periſh? With Angels and with glorified Saints, let us make God our all, our portion, and our hearts-deſire; for our great Creator is much more amiable than his own handy-

handy-work. Let us leave the Men that know not God, to fall down before their Idols of Clay and Dirt; but let us with the higheſt reverence, with the moſt cordial ſubmiſſion, adore him, from whoſe Favour we have life. Let us leave them to dig in the Bowels of this Earth for a ſordid happineſs; but let us ariſe and go hence. Let us go and ſeek after God; Let us go and ſeek till we find him; and when we have found him, let nothing in this World, no pleaſure, no pain, no promiſes, no threats, nor life, nor death, make us part with our dear God again. Let us never ceaſe to ſigh and to long for him; Ler us never be weary of his work, nor ever think that we can do too much for ſo good a Maſter: Let us feaſt our ſelves with the chearful expectation of his Eternal Love; and ſo take up the good reſolution of the Church, *Cant.* 4. 6. *Until the day break, and the ſhadows flee away, I will get me to the mountain of Myrrh, and to the hill of Frankincenſe.*

6. *That you may with more care ſeek and endeavour to obtain the Favour of God, improve your experiences to this purpoſe.* Have you not found what a pleaſant thing it is to be near to him? to have acceſs to his Throne? and to ſee his Face? And on the contrary, Have you not known what a diſmal and uncomfortable ſtate it is to be without him? And there are two ſorts of Experiences that may be very ſeviceable to you in this great affair.

1. *Thoſe Experiences that you have of all other things in common with the reſt of Men*: Have you

not found, that the Promiſes and Friendſhips of this World have been very changeable? Have you not embraced many a time a Cloud, when you have promiſed your ſelves a real and a ſolid happineſs? Has the World given you that pleaſant entertainment, that cordial ſatisfaction that you propoſed to your ſelves when you firſt let your minds run upon it? Have you not a Thouſand times called it a very vain World? Have you not a Thouſand times found it to be ſo? Have you not prick'd your hands, and vex'd your ſouls, when you thought to have gathered the pleaſant flower that you doated on? Have you not ſeen that the moſt beautiful Roſe is attended with a neighbouring Thorn? Has it ſmelt ſo ſweet, and laſted ſo long as you once thought it would? Has not all your Wine had ſome Wormwood and Gall mingled with it? Has not every Comfort had a mixture of a Croſs? and where you hoped for the greateſt pleaſures, have you not met with a ſad allay of grief? Have you not been eager and importunate, and reſtleſs, for this or that creature-good? and when you have obtained it, has it been ſo ſuitable, ſo delightful, ſo every way amiable, as at a diſtance it did ſeem to be? He muſt be a young Man indeed, that hath not found this World to be a cheat; and he muſt be a Fool, that when he has been once cheated, will ſuffer himſelf to be again impos'd upon. A few years experience will make us all to ſay with the Wiſe Man, That *all is vanity and vexation of ſpirit*; and if we hope to extract more from it than ſo great an Obſerver of Nature as he,

he, did, we ſhall be miſerably deceived. In our firſt and raſh deſires we flatter our ſelves with ſomething here on Earth, that is great, and plauſible, and charming; but in our more ſedate and ſecond thoughts, we find that all that is under the Sun is but a ſhew, and a meer appearance: And when we find it to be ſo, as a great many have already, and all ſhall in a little time; it becomes us to apply our ſelves to ſomething that is more durable and ſatisfying, and that is only the Favour and the Love of God.

2. *Improve not only your common, but your Spiritual Experiences to this end and purpoſe.* I ſuppoſe there are a great many people here, that have been under diſtreſs of ſoul, and that in ſuch diſtreſs have been brought very low; Now, What was it, I pray you, that gave you relief in ſo ſad a Caſe? Was it that you had many Friends, and great Eſtates, and a flouriſhing Trade, and abundance of outward Accommodations? I am ſure you will anſwer, No, no; none of theſe things gave us the leaſt help. Methinks I hear you ſaying, We tried ſeveral methods for a Cure, we tried ſeveral diverſions and pleaſures, the Converſations of our Friends, and whatever innocent Recreation it was that we thought might give us eaſe; we heard Sermons, we read good Books, we enquired of our Miniſters, but we found them all to be *Phyſicians of no value*; they did not open our Eyes, nor heal our Wounds, nor anſwer our Doubts, nor refreſh our tired and weary Souls, till God himſelf was pleaſed to do it. Nothing in all the

World did avail us; nor could all the means we uſed, pull out the Sting that the ſenſe of our guilt and condemnation pierced us with; *Abanah* and *Pharphar*, all the Rivers of *Damaſcus*, and all the ſtreams of ſenſual delights, were not able to mitigate or quench our thirſt: All was deſolation, and terror, and amazement; till his Face was pleaſed to ſhine through the threatning cloud. We lived in darkneſs, and in the deepeſt ſorrows, till he became our light and joy; we were ſinking, till he held us up; and dying, till he was pleaſed to revive us: All the delight and mirth that ever the World gave us, was but as a flaſh of Lightning to that clear and ſerene day that his Grace created in our hearts; his Love did, indeed, mitigate our pains, and remove our ſores; and one beam from him was as the dawn of Heaven: He has fed us, like *John the Baptiſt*, with Honey in the Deſert; his Loving-kindneſs did, indeed, quench our thirſt. This I know is the ſenſe of your Souls, that have taſted how good the Lord is; and having had ſo pleaſant a reliſh of his Mercy, I beſeech you, let not the remembrance of it wear away. Oh! remember with delight, the tranſports, the ſweetneſs, and the ſatisfaction that you have found in God; the ſettlement, and the quiet that you have had, when you have caſt your Anchor on the Rock of Ages: what views you have then had of the *New Jeruſalem*, and what a pleaſant proſpect you ſaw when you were upon the Mount. Oh! remember how often you have fallen, and his kind hand has raiſed you up; how

how often you have been at the very Gates of the Grave, and he has been your Life; how often his Bowels have melted over you, when you were Rebellious; how often he has embraced you, when you were Prodigals; how often he has forgiven you, and bid you be of good comfort, when you did condemn your ſelves. You have found all the Creatures as the drop of the Bucket; and how unable ſo ſmall a drop was to gratify your earneſt longings, your pantings and deſires; and that after many a weary ſtep, you found no reſt till he manifeſted himſelf, and gave you that compoſure and ſtillneſs, which in vain you ſought from lower things. Have you not found more ſolace in an hours converſe with God, in Prayers and Meditation, than in many days diſcourſes with the beſt of Men? This World, I dare ſay, you have found to be worſe and worſe, the more you have tried it; but the clearer views you have had of God, have ſhewed you ſomething in him ſtill more and more excellent. How often have you come to hear his Word with entangled, perplexed thoughts, and he has ſent you away refreſhed and ſatisfied? How often have you with ſad hearts, and mournful looks, kneeled down in your Cloſets, and have riſen again, after having had communion with him, with great calmneſs and ſerenity? So that you have cried out, Oh! that I had known him ſooner, and loved him with my firſt affections; for he very well deſerves all my faculties, and all the powers of my ſoul. Remember the large experiences you have had of the goodneſs

of God! With what kindneſs did he draw you at the firſt! with what gracious Promiſes did he cheriſh your languiſhing and your feeble hopes! How ſeaſonably did he awaken you from the ſleep of death, with his threats and calls, and ſeaſonable chaſtiſements! How has he made your broken bones to rejoice! How often has he enlarged your hearts in Duty, and you have felt ſo much of his Power and Preſence, and in ſo comfortable and ſo ſweet a manner, as if you had not only heard of him by the hearing of the ear, but ſeen him alſo with the ſeeing of the eye! How often has he renewed his Mercy, when you thought he would never be favourable any more! And how often, when your unbelief has made you ſay that he was departed, has he return'd again! How often has he liſtned to your doleful cries, and given you many a proof of his love in the gracious anſwer of your Prayers! How many times has your heart and fleſh failed, and he hath given you ſupport! How many times have you been ſorely tempted, and he has overthrown the Tempter! How many Storms have put you into conſternation, and he has appeared to your help, and ſaid, *It is I, be not afraid*! He has put you, it may be, into the Fiery Furnace; but he has been with you there, and made even the ſevereſt Tryals to purge away your droſs. He has corrected you with a very tender and a skilful hand, and has ordered, with a moſt exact Wiſdom, all your troubles, both as to the nature of them, and as to their duration; they have not been too

heavy,

heavy, nor have they ſtayed too long, *Pſal.* 119. 75. I ſpeak as to wiſe men, judge you what I ſay. Theſe Experiencies well remembred, will be a means to preſerve you from loſing the favour of God, which is your Life. As 'tis uſeful for your health to remember what hurt you, and what did you good heretofore; ſo theſe ſpiritual Experiences will be very beneficial: For may you not ſay with *David*, Pſ. 119. 96. *I have ſeen an end of all perfections; but thy commandment is exceeding broad.*

CHAP. V.

Of Aſſurance. As alſo of the Falſe Grounds upon which many are apt to conclude, that they are God's Favourites, when they are not ſo.

7. *ENdeavour to be aſſured that you enjoy God's Favour, that is your Life*: Not only to believe that it is ſo, but to feel this animating your Faculties, and ſpreading it ſelf through every part, that you may not only have his Countenance, but the Light of it; and that you may not walk in darkneſs, without the pleaſant beholding of this Glorious and Reviving Sun. His Favour towards you, tho' it be undiſcerned, will make you bleſſed; but nothing but the ſenſe of it will cauſe you to rejoice. Tho' you be ſafe, yet it is very deſire-

able to know that you are ſo; not only to be going towards Heaven, but to ſee the Crown of Glory ſhining before your Eyes as you go along. It is very terrible, tho' God be your Father, if you cannot think of him, but as of a Judge. Fears and Doubts are diſquieting and uneaſie things; the reſtleſneſs and the torment that they give you, ſhould excite you to try all means whereby they may be removed. It is much better to have a vigorous and a ſtirring Life, than the ſickly, feeble motions of it, that are ſcarcely diſcerned: As in *Apoplexies* and other Diſeaſes, where the ſoul is retired inward, and the ſpirits have ſo cold a motion, that they ſcarcely make the Pulſe to beat. What peace can you have without an evidence of your Intereſt in God? What comfort from his Promiſes, if you know not whether they belong to you or not? Will it enrich you to ſee large Treaſures, if you have no ſhare therein? What tho' there are abundance of Fountains of Conſolation, if you are like to periſh and to die with thirſt? You muſt endeavour to have your hope, *as an Anchor that is both ſure and ſtedfaſt*, Heb. 6. 19. And you have encouragements given you for an hope ſo ſure. And (as one ſays) Hope were but a poor Anchor, if it ſhould leave the ſoul to the courteſy of a Wave, to the clemency of a Rock, to the diſpoſing of a Storm. Hope were but a weak Anchor, if it ſhould let the ſoul be loſt with uncertainties, or leave it in danger of Shipwrack. Be not ſatisfied that you think that God's Favour is your Life, till you can ſay with *David*, *He is the health of my countenance, and my God*,

God, Pſal. 43. 5. and theſe two met together, will produce a very ſolid and a comfortable joy; when you can ſay with the Rapture of *Thomas*, *My Lord, and my God*! or with the Church, *I am my beloved's, and he is mine*; Cant. 6. 3. Uſe all the Ordinances, the Word, and the Sacraments to this purpoſe, that you may find him whom your Soul loves; *Cant.* 3. 3, 4. Oh what will be your pleaſure, when you ſee the great God of Heaven to be your own God! to ſee that Saviour, of whom the Prophets, and Apoſtles, and Martyrs, and all your Miniſters, and your Chriſtian Friends, have ſpoke ſo much, to be at length your own Saviour! how will you be at eaſe, when you ſee his Excellencies to be yours! and that you are among the joyful and adoring-throng that wait upon him! To love him, and to have his love ſhewed to you, and to have theſe mutual Delights to increaſe, but never to decay; to poſſeſs one another for ever with renewed and repeated Extaſies; this is an Heaven begun, that no thoughts can fully apprehend, nor words declare; in order to this, you muſt *give all diligence to make your calling and election ſure*; 2 Pet. 1. 10. Often you muſt try your hearts, and your Actions by the Word of God, and beg his Spirit, and obey his motions, and excite your Graces, and watch againſt Sin, and deny your ſelves. The Trader endeavours all he can to get a plentiful Trade, and would have a great deal of buſineſs, and money flowing in upon him: The Merchant ſtrives to have all the plentiful Returns imaginable: Oh! Let us ſtrive that our Souls may not only be ſafe, but that they

they may proſper too: not only that we may pray, but pray with boldneſs to God, as Children to a Father: and when we are able to look upon him as ſo related, and as our Friend, our Service will be more fervent, and all our work done with greater life and heart; our ſlaviſh fears and deſpondence will give way to Love and Hope; and then every thing that concerns us, will undergo a moſt comfortable change: we ſhall be able to hear the Thunders, and the Curſes, and the Threatnings of the Law, without aſtoniſhment and terror; becauſe we ſhall dwell as in God's Pavilion: We ſhall be able to think of Hell, and not be overwhelmed; becauſe we ſhall look upon it as a Dungeon, from which we are ſaved by the Grace of God: We ſhall attend to the Meſſages of the Goſpel, for it will bring us glad tidings; the bleſſed Angels will be your Guardians, the Miniſters of the Church your Directors, and your Helpers; the Malice of the Wicked, and the Rage of Devils will fall below us, and not reach our happineſs.

8. *Take heed of concluding the ſpecial favour of God, from the Common Mercies you enjoy.*

1. *You muſt not conclude you have this Favour from any of your outward Privileges.* God may long dwell among a People by the outward Teſtimonies of his Preſence, by his Word, and the means of Grace, and yet leave them at laſt. Who were once more happy than the *Jews* in his Protection, and yet none are more miſerable than they are by his departure? *Jeruſalem*, where

where he had placed his Name, and that was once the glory of all Cities, is now no more remarkable for its glorious Temple, and its ſtately Towers; for its Riches, Grandeur and Splendor, wherewith it ſhined heretofore. The Holy Land, the Country of *Judea*, which our Saviour bleſt with his preſence, which he inſtructed with his heavenly Sermons, and honoured with his Miracles, is now no more the ſame *Judea* that it once was: it is now groaning under the cruel Dominion of the *Turks*: and the Seven Churches have loſt their Golden Candleſticks, and the bleſſed Gueſt that one walkt in the midſt of them: The Stars that ſhone there, are now eclips'd, and their glory gone. It is a great mercy indeed to have the Goſpel, but it will not in the iſſue be ſo to you, unleſs it ſhine into your hearts: If it do not prevail to the converſion of your Souls, it will aggravate your ruine: inaſmuch as you will go from the cleareſt Light, to the thickeſt Darkneſs; from the brighteſt Day, to the moſt diſmal Night. You cannot conclude that you have this Favour from any common gifts of knowledge, or of underſtanding, unleſs you be ſanctified throughout. When our Lord aſcended, *he gave gifts to men.* * Like thoſe Liberalities which Kings ſcatter indifferently among their Subjects in the day of their Coronation, without making a diſtinction between the good and bad; and of thoſe pieces of Gold and Silver ſeveral partake that leaſt deſerve them; but their great Honours, and the Principal Offices of the Crown they reſerve for their peculiar Favourites, and for thoſe that belong

* *Du Moulin's* Sermons, XI. Decade, Serm. 2.

long to the Houſhold, and wait upon their Perſons: ſo Chriſt diſtributes many Favours to all that enjoy his Goſpel: but there are ſome that are peculiar to his own Family, as diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of men; ſuch are the gifts of Faith, of Regeneration and Adoption: Happy was the Womb that bare him, and happy were *the Paps that gave him ſuck*, and yet more happy are thoſe that keep his Words; *Luke* 11.27,28. *Neither circumciſion, nor uncircumciſion availeth any thing, but a new creature*, Gal. 6.15.

2. *You cannot conclude from your outward Proſperity, your Riches or abundance in the World, that you have this Favour of God, in which is Life.* Our Lord, that by his own Example did intend to ſhew to men better things than the Goods of this World, did firſt cauſe his Angels to appear to the poor Shepherds, not to the Courts of Princes, and the Schools of Philoſophers. He could have had Kings, if he had pleaſed, to wait upon him, and to lay their Crowns and Scepters at his feet; but he choſe a Train of poor Followers, whom he did enrich with Heavenly Treaſures, and not with thoſe of this Earth, though the whole Creation, and all its glories, were at his Command: The Poor were they that received the Goſpel; and *not many Noble are called*, &c. 1 *Cor.* 1.27. The *poor of the world are rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom*; Jam. 2.5. Tho as Riches are no ſign of God's Election, neither is Poverty a mark of Grace: but yet with the Lower ſort of People, and thoſe that are not many times very wiſe for this World, God does often build his Church. Afflictions

and

and Croſſes are no mark of his diſpleaſure; nor is a continued Proſperity the character of his Love: for many times God lets his Sun ſhine upon the Wicked to their dying day; their ſtrength is firm; the Rod is not upon them; they fear no evil, they know no ſorrow: there are no tears in their eyes, no ſadneſs in their hearts, no complaining in their Families; See *Job* 21. from the 7th to the 13th verſe. Riches are indeed of themſelves great bleſſings; with them a man may do abundance of good works; which the poorer ſort of People cannot, by reaſon of thoſe ſtraits and difficulties that they are to wraſtle with: they are great Talents, and ſerviceable to great purpoſes; they do afford men great leiſure for the affairs of their Souls; and not being perplexed with anxious cares how to get a livelihood, they may read and meditate, and pray with more devotion; but then theſe ſoft and eaſie Bleſſings meeting with the Corruptions that is in Humane Nature, they prove frequently to be a ſnare; they frequently miniſter to Pride, and Vanity, and Luxury, and Exceſs; to Senſualities and worldly Luſts; and for that reaſon it is that our Saviour ſays, *A rich man ſhall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven*, Matt. 19. 23. Few meet with Heaven here, and an Heaven hereafter; *Luke* 16. 19, 20, 21. The Rich man had all manner of Accommodations; a ſtately Dwelling, a throng of Admirers, ſoft Garments, and curious Entertainments, compoſed of every thing that could be fetch'd from the Land, the Sea, or the Air; and in the midſt of all this Plenty,

Plenty, had the Curſe of an Uncharitable Spirit: the poor *Lazarus* was cloathed with Rags, whilſt he ruffled in his Silks: the poor man, whilſt he had his exceſſes, and his plenty, had not what was neceſſary to life. He was a modeſt Beggar, he asked but for the Crumbs that fell from his Table, the ſweepings of his Houſe, and yet he was denied. And to all this want there was added an increaſe of miſeries by his painful Sores; and the poor man had no Friends to viſit him, no Phyſician to bind up his Wounds, no Cordial to ſupport his Spirits; in this ſorrowful poſture lay the poor *Lazarus*; and his Carkaſs was even putrefying before he came to dye; the Dogs were the only kind Creatures; they lickt his Sores, and aſſwaged the vehemence of the pain with their healing Tongues; 'They (as one expreſſes it) were Humane, 'though their Maſter was a Brute; and yet this poor man was very happy: when his pains made him at length to dye, Angels were ſent to convey his newly-delivered Soul away; to carry him that was ſtarved on Earth, to the Feaſt of Glory; where he will never be in diſtreſs or trouble any more. The poor Man had a very weary Journey, but moſt ſweet refreſhment when he comes to his Journeys-end. He was expoſed to the injuries of the VVeather, and the ſharpneſs of the Cold; but in *Abraham's* Boſome he was inexpreſſibly comforted; plenty enough had he in his Father's Houſe, though he could not obtain here, with all his begging, ſo much as one Crumb; and the Rich-man, a little after, had his polluted and unready Soul

torn

torn away, and was condemned to greater deſtruction for having been ſo cruel to this poor man: This proud and ſcornful VVretch, whom with his flaming eyes he ſaw at reſt whilſt he was in his Torment, and who was become the beggar then, and fain would have had one drop to cool his burning Tongue, but it was denied; and he that ſhewed no mercy, found none; *v.* 23, 24. and his Hell was hotter to him, for having lived ſo much at eaſe here on Earth; and it increaſed his Flames to remember how many were haſting to the ſame place by his ill Example; and who, when they come thither, would encreaſe his torment. So that we may ſay to Rich men, what a good old Miniſter ſaid to a Lord, after he had ſhewed him his ſtately Houſe, his Gardens, his Fiſh-ponds, and his other Conveniences for a pleaſant and eaſie Life; *My Lord* (ſaid he) *you had need make ſure of Heaven, for it will be bad going to Hell from ſuch a place as this.* Many People think, that becauſe their Endeavours ſucceed well, their Trades flouriſh, and their VVealth increaſes, that ſurely they are loved of God, and that theſe things are the marks of his peculiar Favour. You may live in pleaſures, and yet be dead while you live. Your Bodies may want nothing, and yet your unregarded Souls ſuffer under miſerable decays; you may be lifted up to Heaven with outward enjoyments, and yet they may only expoſe you to a greater fall, and a more amazing danger. You are healthful, it may be, while others are ſick; but your health is not any other than a greater Talent which is given to you, and of which

which you muſt render a very ſtrict Account: Your ways, it may be, are ſmooth, but do they not lead you to ruine, and the Grave? There is nothing more formidable than ſpiritual Judgments; and of all ſpiritual Judgments, none ſo great, as for God to let you alone to chuſe your own way, to take your own courſe, and to follow the devices of your own hearts: And it is a mark of his Anger kindled at a more than ordinary rate, when he ſays, *Hoſ.* 4. 14. *I will not puniſh their ſons and daughters any more.* Reſt not therefore in this, but ſeek for ſanctifying Grace, and the pardon of your ſins with your whole heart.

3. *Do not think, that becauſe your Conſciences are not under trouble, that for that very reaſon you have God's Favour.* The Eaſe that many Sinners have, is diſtempered, and will fade way; 'tis like the Eaſe of an Apoplexy, that benumbs the ſenſe, and weakens life; 'tis like the ſlumbers of the ſick that are cauſed with *Opiates*, and ſtupifying Potions: As many times true Believers fear, where there is no cauſe of fear; ſo do Sinners hope where there is no cauſe of hope at all. Many a Saint weeps that is going to *Jeruſalem*, becauſe he ſees not the bleſſed place that is before him; and many a ſecure ſoul is aſleep at the very door of Hell, becauſe he does not perceive the danger that is underneath; if he did, it would terrify him to ſee that the flood is coming, and his Houſe is only built on the Sand; to ſee that the Sword is drawn, and his Adverſary is on the way, and he has not prepared to meet him. Some indeed have queſtioned, whether be the greater

greater Sin, Preſumption, or Deſpair? It is no queſtion but they are both very bad; they are both Rocks; and if a man be Shipwrackt, it is no great matter on what Rock he ſplits, when he is caſt away. Though God will make allowances even for the deſpairing Expreſſions and Thoughts of his Servants in great and long deſertions; he was gracious to *David*, though he deſpairingly ſaid, *I ſhall one day fall by the hand of Saul.* And to *Zion*, tho ſhe ſaid, *the Lord hath forgotten me. My ſtrength and my hope is periſhed from the Lord*; Lam. 3. 18. But yet it is a ſin that we ought to reſiſt and ſtrive againſt, and no leſs againſt Preſumption, which ſlays its thouſands every day. Oh how many are there! there are too many that eat and drink, and are merry, and yet know not whether God be their Friend, or their Enemy; *Pſal.* 55. 19. *They feel no changes, and therefore they fear him not.* But if ſpeedy, and ſerious, and hearty Repentance prevent not, they will ſhortly feel a change that will ſpoil and blaſt all their hopes; they'l feel a change that will at the ſame time conclude their Life, and ſend them to Judgment, and lodge their Souls in miſery, and where will their hopes then be? My Friends, the way of Life is ſtrait; there are abundance of miſtakes about it; there are abundance of windings and turnings, of labyrinths and dangers, by the means of which you may be hindred in your Pilgrimage, if you do not take great care: there are ſeveral ways like to this way, that have a reſemblance to it, and yet vaſtly differ from it: there is the Peace of God,

and there is the Peace of *Satan*; it is the deſign of that malicious Spirit, to let you be quiet in your Sins, that you may not ſee their evil, nor feel their bitterneſs, and then you ſave him the labour to make you miſerable, for you make your ſelves ſo. Suffer not him to blind your eyes, nor to lead you to deſtruction, whilſt you never ſo much as make one halt, nor ſtartle at it. You hear others complaining of their Sins, and crying out, that they are forſaken, and undone, and miſerable, and you thank God you have no trouble, your Conſciences are ſtill and quiet. I beſeech you take heed that it be founded upon good Reaſons, that it prove not to be only a ſhort ſlumber, and not a laſting peace. It may be you never doubted of God's love to you, and it is very well if you have no cauſe to doubt: You think, it may be, that ſuch as are in Soul diſtreſſes, are ſo, becauſe they have committed greater ſins than other men; and that Vengeance therefore, like the *Viper* on *Paul*'s Hand, faſtens on them becauſe they have been guilty of ſome very great and monſtrous Sin: but you muſt know, the Judgments of God are too great a deep for you to fathom; he has wiſe Ends in thoſe ſevere Diſpenſations, though thoſe that are at eaſe may have committed as great Sins as thoſe that are in trouble: many times a great Calm precedes an Earthquake; many times the Sky is very clear juſt before the Clouds gather, and the Lightning and Thunder comes. Beware, leſt you be unſafe whilſt you are moſt confident: Beware, leſt you go down to the Grave, as thouſands do, with

with a fooliſh and ungrounded hope. Remember the fooliſh Virgins; and that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 3.

CHAP. VI.

Shewing by what means we may know, whether we have God's Favour, or not. And firſt, by the graces of his Spirit, though the acting of them is neither ſo ſtrong, nor ſo comfortable at one time as at another. And ſecondly, by our hatred of Sin; and our being ſatisfied with all his Providences.

THE next thing is to *Examine, and to try, whether you have indeed this Favour of God, in which is Life.* There are a great many people that think God to be their Friend, when he is their Enemy; and a great many troubled diſtreſſed Chriſtians think that he is their Enemy, when he is their Friend. Let us, I beſeech you, be very careful in a thing that ſo nearly concerns both our preſent, and our future peace: Let us take heed, that neither the Devil, nor our own hearts cheat us in a matter that is of ſo vaſt a conſequence; and we have need of the greater care, becauſe, if we ſhould flatter our ſelves with a fooliſh hope, that we are God's Favourites, when we are not truly ſo; as our vain Expectations would leave us at the laſt, ſo

the Ruine that it would bring forth, would come with a double weight upon us; for to fall from great hopes, is worſe than never to have hoped at all: to be miſerable after we have thought our ſelves happy, gives a more acute and bitter ſting to that miſery. There is many an one in Hell now groaning under the Eternal Wrath of God, that thought he ſhould have ſeen the Smiles of his Face, and not have been terrified with his Frowns; that thought he ſhould have walkt in the Streets of the New *Jeruſalem*, in liberty, and light, and peace; whereas he is now in Chains of darkneſs, and in anguiſh inexpreſſible. With what tenderneſs, with what caution, and with what holy fear ſhould we manage ſuch an Affair as this! with what ſolemnity ought I to proceed, when I am enquiring whether I am a Favourite of God, or not; whether I belong to the Living, or yet remain among the Dead; whether I am an Heir of Heaven, or an utter ſtranger to the bleſſed place, and the God that makes it to be ſo bleſſed as it is? And there is not one perſon that reads this, but has cauſe to make ſuch an Enquiry; and to ſay with himſelf, I feel by the warmth and vigorous motion of my ſpirits, that I have a natural Life: I eat, and drink, and ſleep, and take abundance of care, and uſe a thouſand projects to maintain this ſame dear and pleaſant Life; but whilſt my Body is indulged, and thrives, is not my poor ſlighted Soul in a ſtate of death? and whilſt men ſhew me favour, and are friendly to me, have I the favour of that God that is to be my Judge, and who

who is either the beſt Friend, or the worſt Enemy? Now in this matter we may proceed by ſuch Rules as theſe.

1. *Have you thoſe graces of the Spirit wrought in you, which are the certain pledges and tokens of his Favour?* Are you rich in faith, and yet poor in ſpirit? Are you hungring and thirſting after Righteouſneſs? And when you find your own beſt Actions fall vaſtly ſhort of the ſtrict and pure demands of the Divine Law, do you prize and ſeek the Righteouſneſs that is in Chriſt? Is that Sin now bitter to your taſte, and grievous to your thoughts, which was once highly eſteemed and prized? Do you hate and bewail that with a relenting ſpirit, that was once your dearly beloved, and your joy? Are you mortified to this World, and do you walk humbly, as wiſely conſidering how weak you are, and how liable to be ſurprized, and to fall, always conſidering that you are very ſinful, and very frail? Theſe Graces of Faith, Mortification, Humility, and the like, are certain tokens of the Love of God; and in a Soul thus qualified, he delights to fix his Habitation; *Iſa.* 57. 15. in ſuch a Soul there is a Heaven begun: and it not only lives, but will attain new ſtrength, and proceed to further degrees of life: though it now flouriſh in the Courts of the Lord, yet his Light ſhining upon it, will cauſe it to take the deeper root, and to look with a more amiable freſhneſs: the Self-conceited ſhall miſs abundance of refreſhments that a Soul ſo lowly will meet withall; as thoſe ſhowers of

Rain that ſlide away from the tops of Mountains, deſcend into the Valleys, and make them more fruitful; *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty.* He does not give this to remain for a ſmall ſpace only, but to remain with his Servants till their work be done: it is called the *earneſt of our Inheritance*; Epheſ. 1. 14. An Earneſt, you know, is part of the Payment not to be returned again; and we are *ſaid to be ſealed with this Spirit unto the day of Redemption*: Eph. 4. 30. *i. e.* that is, as one explains it, God does by that diſtinguiſh Believers from other men, as Seals are employed to make a difference from other things that are not ſo much to be regarded; and as we ſeal our own Goods, or Papers, or ſome particular thing that is moſt precious; which Expreſſion calls us to meditate on the infinite tenderneſs of God's Love to men. For a man does not love any thing ſo much as that which is his own; he looks upon other things, in which he has no propriety, with an indifferent and unconcerned eye, even the ſtately Glories of a Palace do not affect him with ſo great a joy, as the Little Conveniences of his own unobſerved Cottage, becauſe it is his own: And further, a Seal often carries the Arms of him whoſe Seal it is; or the Image of ſome great Perſon: ſo the work of the Spirit is to engrave in our hearts, Faith, Hope and Love; theſe are the Enſigns of the New Covenant; and form in us the Image of God, which conſiſts in Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Holineſs. God does not ſet this mark but upon thoſe that are indeed his Favourites;

vourites; that by the tenderneſs and ſoftneſs of their hearts, are prepared to receive his Impreſſions. * But in this matter we are in a great meaſure paſſive; as the Wax receives the ſame marks that the Seal ſtamps upon it: theſe are ſaving-works of the Spirit which I have mentioned; whereas a great many common Gifts are beſtowed upon thoſe whom God abhors: many a man may have Light enough to ſhew others the way to Heaven, and yet never walk therein himſelf; and he that was a Star in the Firmament of the Church on Earth, may ſit in darkneſs; 1 *Cor.* 13. 1, 2. *Though I ſpeak with the tongues of men and angels, and have not charity, I am become as ſounding braſs, or a tinkling cymbal: And though I have the gift of prophecy, and underſtand all myſteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, ſo that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.* You muſt under this Head obſerve theſe two things.

* *Claude ſur* Eph. 4. 30. p. 20.

1. Not to expect to be alike ſtrong in every Grace.

2. Not to have at all times the ſame Comforts.

1. *You muſt not expect to be alike ſtrong in every Grace:* We ought to ſtrive to *be* * *compleat*, to have all the pieces of our Chriſtian Armour poliſh'd, and fit for action, and well fitted and put upon us; but thoſe parts where is the moſt danger of a Wound, thoſe parts where is the ſeat of Life, we are principally to ſecure and guard: So thoſe Graces we are firſt of all to look after, and to cheriſh, which produce and

keep the reſt in vigour; ſuch as Faith, and Repentance, and Humility. Tho' moſt certain it is, that all Men, even of thoſe that are God's Favourites, are not of the ſame ſtature, nor the ſame ſtrength, nor have they as much skill in every Duty, as it may be they have in one or two; it is ſo ordered by the Holy Providence of God, that all in Chriſt ſhall have Tribulations, but very different many times from one another; that ſo the different Grace that they are to exerciſe under their ſeveral Tryals, may ſhine with a brighter Glory. Thus of old, *Abraham* was peculiarly eminent for his *Faith*, *Moſes* for his *Meekneſs*; *Job* for his *Patience*. All Believers, by the Privileges with which they are inveſted, are Stars; but yet even here one Star differs from another Star in Glory. As there are ſeveral gifts of the ſame Spirit, that are all uſeful to the whole; ſo the Graces that are wrought by him, do, according to his Soveraign pleaſure, produce ſeveral effects, according to the ſubjects in which they are; and many times are very much advanced, or obſtructed, by a good or ill temper of the body. Hence thoſe that have a cholerick temper, the fierineſs of their natural ſpirits, that upon every ſmall occaſion are apt to be enflamed, does very much hinder that meekneſs and calmneſs which is one of the Graces of the holy Spirit; and ſo others that are naturally tenacious, and cloſe, and narrow-ſoul'd, do many times ſmell too much even of theſe ill qualities, when they are converted; but it ought not to be ſo; for if there be any particular

ticular ſin to which we are more enclined by our conſtitution than to another, we ought more induſtriouſly to ſet our ſelves againſt that ſin.

2. You muſt not expect a continuance of the ſame comforts at all times; for the Spirit *blows where he liſteth, and when he will*, Joh 3. 8. Tho' the new Creature be formed in you by the Grace of God; yet you cannot perceive its motions with ſo diſtinct a ſenſe at one time as at another; tho' by the interceſſion of Chriſt, his Favourites are ſecured from a total and final Apoſtacy, yet they may fall now and then, and their Life ſeem to decline, and a ſpiritual faintneſs come upon it, and a very deep ſorrow may cover, and, as it were, bury your hopes and your joys; but yet there is that vital Principle that ſhall not ſee corruption; that ſeed of Grace that will now and then flouriſh with acceptable fruit. Your Faith may, in violent temptations, be like the weak and undiſcernable ſtirring of the ſoul; when the body is in a Swoon, the ſoul does ſeem for a while to be departed; but after the ſpirits are refreſhed, it animates the whole body, and exerciſes all the functions and offices of Life as it uſed to do. When the Ship was moſt violently toſt with a Tempeſt, yet our Lord was there; tho' the poor trembling Diſciples thought he did not care whether they were loſt or ſaved. Thus *Mary* was drowned with Tears after his Reſurrection; and not finding him where ſhe expected, nor as ſoon, ſhe gave way to ſorrow: *They have taken away the Lord*, ſays ſhe, *Joh.* 20. 13. *and*

13. *and I know not where they have laid him*; when the very perſon that ſhe had then in view, was the ſame dear Saviour and Friend that ſhe long'd to ſee: And when with great tenderneſs and familiarity he diſcovered himſelf, and called her *Mary*, then ſhe full well knew that it was her Maſter, and her poor drooping heart was filled with joy and tranſport, *She fell at his feet, and kiſſed them.* God does not equally manifeſt his favour, no, not even to the ſame perſon, who ſometimes triumphs, and ſometimes is very deſolate; as the ſame veſſel that is ſometimes lifted up even as to Heaven it ſelf, by the riſing and the ſwelling Waves, is the next minute ſinking to the bottom of the Sea, and ready to be ſwallowed in the formidable depths; tho' if we were duly prepared, the face of our God would appear with as amiable an aſpect at one time as at another; for if any frowns be there, our ſins are the cauſe; and becauſe we are ſinful, 'tis neceſſary for us now and then to weep, as well as always to rejoice. The Clouds, and the Showers are as needful to the Earth, as is the conſtant ſhine, and the fairer weather. Our Graces yield no delight to us, till the Spirit actuate and enliven them: till *he blow upon the garden*, Cant. 4. 16. *the ſpices do not flow forth*; nor do the ſweeteſt of the flowers ſmell with ſuch a perfume, and ſuch a fragrant ſcent as they then do. If we would have a warm ſenſe of the Love of Chriſt ſhed abroad in our hearts, it muſt be done by the efficacy and influence of the Holy-Ghoſt; he brings the moſt ſuitable Truths to re-

remembrance, and he ſeaſonably applies thoſe Promiſes that are moſt comfortable and reviving; he raiſes in us holy courage and hope, and he fills our Sails with his favourable blaſts; he baniſhes that fear, and thoſe perplexing doubts that enſlave us, and ſets before us the Mercy and the Loving-kindneſs of God; and pours into our ſmarting and bleeding Wounds, the Conſolations of the Goſpel. There are, indeed, ſome particular times when God is pleaſed to give to the ſoul the clear manifeſtations of his favour; and they are uſually by Divines ſaid, to be in ſuch particular circumſtances as theſe:

1. He is pleaſed to condeſcend to *New Converts*, that are ſuddenly cheared with mighty Joys, and filled with an admiration of his Grace; He conſiders the weakneſs of theſe tender Pilgrims, and his joy becomes their ſtrength; he feeds them as with Angels food; for he knows they have a great way to go, and therefore he carries them in his Arms, and leads them gently along, and they meet not with thoſe ſharp and heavy Tryals that more experienced Chriſtians meet withal. The ſudden change that ſuch perceive, when they go from groſs darkneſs into a marvellous light, when their Chains are ſtruck off, and their Priſon-doors ſet open, makes them to wonder and adore. Hence it is that they have vigorous affections, and are very active for the Glory of their Saviour; hence it is that their Zeal is ſo fervent, and the flame of their Love burns ſo clear and bright.

2. Ano-

2. Another ſeaſon when God Communicates to his Servants peculiar manifeſtations of his favour, is at *the Lord's Supper*; when they ſee their Redeemer Crucified before their eyes; when they ſee the torments of his Body, and the Agonies of his Soul, how pained, how amazed he was, and that all this pain was for them, and for their Salvation; and that as ſurely as they receive the Bread and the Wine, ſo ſurely do they receive this Jeſus, and all his benefits: Direction for the preſent, and a title to everlaſting Glory; this carries them up to the top of the Mount, this makes them to taſt of the Tree of Life. This ſight of a dying Saviour, and of the Heaven that he purchaſed, makes them to worſhip him with praiſe, and to think themſelves even as already there where he is. To this Table of the Lord, the believing ſoul goes hungry and a thirſt; and from the ſame Table returns greatly pleaſed with ſo Divine a Banquet, tho' not without the moſt earneſt deſires of that entertainment that is reſerved for it above.

3. God is pleaſed to give his Servants a clearer manifeſtation of his Love, *when he intends to employ them in ſome remarkable or extraordinary ſervice*; and as he encouraged *Joſhua* that met with great difficulties, by ſaying, *Fear not, but be of good courage, I am with thee*, Joſh. 1. 9. When he ſets before them the Labours and Dangers of the Combat, he diſplays at the ſame time, the greatneſs of the Reward, and the glory of the Victory: Thus does he animate his Soldiers to fight his Battels; thus he pre-

pares

pares his Martyrs to witneſs to his Truth, and with ſuch a ſenſe of his favour, no Cup ſeems too bitter for them to drink, no danger too great for them to Conquer. Hence *Moſes* ſaid, *If thy preſence go not with me, carry us not up hence*, Exod. 33.15. But with that, he was content to go to what place of difficulty ſoever he was called; he would rather (as one ſays*) be in a deſolate and howling Wilderneſs, than in a pleaſant and a fruitful Land without the preſence of his God; he knew there was no ſweetneſs in *Canaan* without him; there is more Sting than Honey in the Land of Promiſe, unleſs he be there; and *Canaan* it ſelf will prove a Wilderneſs, if he withdraw himſelf. Thus God, as the ſame perſon ſays, when he called *Abraham* to that great expreſſion of obedience, in the ſacrificing of his *Iſaac*, he firſt warms his heart with his Love, and ſeals up the Covenant of Grace to him; he ſpreads before him ample and comprehenſive Promiſes, *I am thy God all-ſufficient*, *I am thy buckler*, *and thine exceeding great reward*; and this will bear up and ſupport *Abraham*, though the ſtaff of his old Age be taken away, and by his own hands caſt into the Fire.

* *Culverwell's Whitestone*, p. 125.

Or, 4. *In Prayer*; God is many times pleaſed to ſhew his favour to the Soul, giving it a ſecret aſſurance of his Mercy, ſaying, I am thy God and portion; and ſo ſends it away filled with good things.

Or, 5. In *great ſtraits*, and pinching wants; when there is leaſt of the creature, there is uſually moſt of the Alſufficient Creator; when all the

the Ciſterns of Earthly Comforts are broken, then this Fountain overflows, and ſends out his comfortable ſtreams. He carries his *people into a Wilderneſs, and there he ſpeaks comfortably to them*, Hoſ. 2. 14. And is then moſt kind, when the World will ſhew them no kindneſs.

Or, 6. after they have got the *victory over ſome Luſts and Corruptions* that were both diſhonourable to him, and uneaſie to them; ſuch a Conqueſt is attended with his approbation, and that gives them a mighty joy, like the joy that the poor *Iſraelites* had, when they ſaw their Enemies drowned in the Red Sea.

Or, 7. *in the day of death*; When all the ſhine of Earthly delights is clouded, and their Sun is juſt upon his ſetting, they lift up their feeble and their longing eyes toward Heaven, and he draws away the Vail, and they ſee the Son of God ſtanding at his Right hand, as their Advocate and Mediator; and then it is that a poor weary Soul ſays with *Paul*, *I deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt*. As Mr. *Flavel* ſays of old Mr. *Lyford*, that being deſired, a little before his death, to let his Friends know in what condition his Soul was, and what his thoughts were about that Eternity to which he ſeemed very near; he anſwered, with a cheerfulneſs ſuitable to a Believer and a Miniſter, *I will let you know how it is with me*; and then ſtretching out an hand that was withered and conſumed with Age and Sickneſs, *Here is*, ſays he, *the Grave, the Wrath of God, and devouring Flames, the juſt puniſhment of Sin on the one ſide, and here am I a poor ſinful ſoul on the other ſide*; but

but this is my comfort, the Covenant of Grace which is eſtabliſhed on ſo many ſure Promiſes, hath ſalved all. There is an Act of Oblivion paſſed in Heaven, I will forgive their iniquities, and their ſins will I remember no more. *This is the bleſſed Privilege of all within the Covenant, among whom I am one.* What a quiet and a bleſſed ſoul was this! How full of joy in a time of uſual amazement and terror! With what ſtrength was he furniſh'd to fight with his laſt Enemy! God grant that you and I may have ſuch ſtrength, and ſuch comfort when it ſhall be our time to dye.

2. *That you may know whether you have the Favour of God, in which is life, you muſt examine, whether you eſteem him more than the world.* There are two Qualifications of this Eſteem: 1. That it be ſerious and deliberate. 2. That it be prevalent. 1. That it be *ſerious:* It muſt be the product of many ſolemn repeated thoughts; a viewing of him as inveſted with many glorious Perfections, as he is repreſented in his Word, and as he ſhines in the face of Jeſus Chriſt: a due conſidering both what he is in himſelf, and what he will be to you. This Eſteem is not wrought by a haſty glance, or a paſſant view, but by deep thoughtfulneſs, attended with calm and ſedate reflections on our own guiltineſs, and his mercy; on our own emptineſs and miſeries, and his Alſufficiency; and then a ballancing of all things that pretend to a ſhare in our Affections, and ſubmitting at length to the juſter claim of God: Saying after this, or the like manner: Lord, I yield up my ſelf to Thee

Thee as Thine own. I was a little while dazled with the gay Pleaſures of a vain World, but now I bid them all farewell, that I may come and taſte thy Joys. I have ſerved Sin and *Satan*, but they have cheated and deceived me; they have given me Vexation inſtead of Reſt, and Husks inſtead of Bread; therefore now, O my Father in Heaven, poor Prodigal as I am, I return to Thee to live in Thy Family, to do Thy Work, and never to wander, or to be extravagant any more. Oh! give me not all my portion in this World, but let me have an Inheritance in that which is to come. Let others purſue their ſeveral projects, and obtain what they purſue; let them ſucceed in their Affairs, and bathe themſelves in the ſofteſt pleaſures; It is God that I ſeek, it is he that I will moſt value: 'Tis a ſign that a beam of heavenly light hath ſhined upon your ſouls, if this be your frame. 2. Your eſteem muſt be *prevalent*; the worſt of Men have ſome eſteem of God, as of a Glorious, a Powerful, a good and happy Being; and they think thoſe the ſafeſt, and the moſt Honourable perſons that enjoy his favour: but then there are a thouſand trifles that they more eſteem and labour after, as Riches, or Eaſe, or Gain, or Applauſe. But can you truly ſay, I would not, if I might, have all the World, without God himſelf? I had rather have him, tho in Poverty, and Diſgrace, and trouble, than to be compaſs'd with throngs of flowing joys without his Love? If you have this Favour of God, you will eaſily look through all the painted Varniſh of the World,

and

and ſee its real vanity. God, and things Divine, will not only gain your hearts, but gain them in a Soveraign and a Powerful degree; and till we thus prize and value him, he is not our God, nor is his favour our portion: If you have this, you will ſay with *David*, Pſal. 4. 6. *Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me.* It is not outward proſperity or grandeur, or the favour of Men, or the eaſe of the fleſh, that I ſeek, but thy ſelf: Thou art my Exaltation, my Joy, my every Good; all that I wiſh for, and all that I deſire.

3. *If you have this favour of God, you will know it by the hatred that you have of ſin.* Whereever this comes it will baniſh that, it will weaken and expel it; and tho it do not altogether deſtroy it, yet it will take away from it all its former amiableneſs and beauty; you will not ſin with ſuch boldneſs as you uſed to do; nay, you will be ſo far from that, that you will not dare to commit the leaſt iniquity; and if there be fixed in your ſouls a real and abiding hatred of Sin, and if you uſe all good endeavours againſt it, it's a moſt certain mark that you are paſt from death to life; you cannot but remember what bitterneſs the remembrance of your former iniquities filled your ſouls withal; what conſternation did then ſeize upon your poor ſpirits, when you thought God your Enemy, and Hell your Portion! What would you then have given for the leaſt beam of that Sun that now ſhines with his gentle beams upon your heads! How welcome was the voice of that Meſſenger that brought you

glad tidings, and that assured you there was Mercy and Hope even for you! Ere you obtained this favour of God, you have had many a restless night, and many a weary day in a sollicitous enquiry, what would become of your immortal souls for ever.

4. *If you have this favour of God, in which is Life, you will be satisfied with all his dispensations that will bring you neaner to himself.* It is an observation not without its Truth, That *wherever God gives Grace, he will send afflictions to exercise that Grace*; and those that have the strongest Grace, must look for such conflicts, such temptations, and such assaults from the Devil in their way to Heaven, as will put all their Grace to the utmost and the largest stretch. None shall come to Heaven without suffering; none can tell how many Millions of sufferings he may endure before the day of Salvation dawns upon him; but he is a very happy person that is not overwhelmed with these innumerable calamities, That whilest he swims as in a Sea of grief, can lift up his head, and exercise his Faith, and say, *Lord, let thy will be done.* If thou wilt be with me in the fiery Furnace, and in the deep Waters, I shall not fear, tho those Flames be very hot, and these Waves roul fast one upon another. Tho it is our Duty to deprecate long, and severe, and heavy Tryals; it is a common thing in our Prayers, to say, *Lord, if thou wilt save me at last, bring any sort of affliction on me, I will refuse nothing.* But alas! alas! we generally do not know what we say; there are those Arrows in God's Quiver, which

which if they ſhould be ſhot againſt us, would cut us to the very ſoul, and make us quickly to change our language. There is that unſpeakable weight in his hand, when he lays it much upon us, that we cannot bear; There are thoſe Pains at his diſpoſal, and which our ſins deſerve, that are in all things, ſetting aſide their duration, as the very pains of Hell. He is the good Man that does not deſire affliction; for he will be ſure to have it whether he do or not: but that can ſubmit to it when it comes upon him; that does not make to himſelf a Croſs, but takes it up when he finds it lying in the way; that can ſay, Lord, if I muſt be poor, in order to Eternal Riches, I am very well ſatisfied; if I muſt be very low, and contemptible, and deſpiſed, before I come to thee, that lowneſs, and that contempt, ſhall be my real glory. If, during all the days of my Pilgrimage, I muſt ſow in Tears, I will go on however, for I know that I ſhall reap in joy. If my corruptible Body muſt languiſh away in pain, and my ſinful Soul have its troubles too, I will wait in hope, and not repine or fret at thy Decree; If I muſt be friendleſs here, I will ſtill prize thee, as my beſt and Eternal Friend; even when I am ſorely oppreſt, I will keep cloſe to thee, I will lay hold on thy Perfections, on thy Covenant, and on thy Promiſes, and I will not let thee go till I be bleſſed. This Favour of God cauſes a perſon to rejoice in him, tho the Fig-tree do not bloſſom; and when any dear Comfort, any Relation is taken away by Death, will make him ſay, My God is

better to me than Ten of theſe Comforts, nay, than many Thouſands of them put together: And tho he ſnatch from my Embraces what I moſt valued in this World, yet he ſhall have my beſt affections, my deſire, my love, my delight as much as ever. A Soul thus prepared to be quiet under the ſevereſt diſpenſations, has Life in the Favour of God; he has that Life that ſhall never expire, but end in Eternal Life.

CHAP. VII.

Of ſeveral other ways whereby a ſenſe of God's favour may be preſerved in our ſouls; and how we may certainly know that we are in that Happy ſtate.

V. IF *you have this Favour of God, you will deſire the continuance of it above all other things*; and this will be both an evidence of your preſent ſincerity, and a means to convey to you a more pleaſant ſenſe of this favour. In all outward actions, as Prayer, Hearing, Giving to the Poor, and the like, there may be a very great reſemblance between a true Chriſtian and an Hypocrite; but ſpiritual deſires being the immediate off-ſpring of the ſoul, are not liable to ſo many cheats; and your deſires after God will be very ſtrong and earneſt, and produce powerful and ſenſible effects, for they will be the fruit

fruit of a lively Faith, and of an enlightned Underſtanding that ſees the value of a God. And this will render more ſtrong the motions of your Souls; for ignorance of him is the Mother of all feeble and languiſhing Deſires. Your breathings after him will be like Hunger and Thirſt, which are very uneaſy to Nature, and give us the moſt raging and eager Appetites, and make us not well ſatisfied till they meet with their proper Gratifications. Pſal. 42. 1, 2. *As the heart panteth after the water-brooks: ſo panteth my ſoul after thee, O God. My ſoul thirſteth for God, for the living God: when ſhall I come and appear before him?* Even as that poor Creature, when 'tis purſued with Hunters, and greatly heated with its flight, longs to be refreſht with the cool Streams of Water, ſo will you, when haraſſed with the Temptations of the Devil, and his malicious and moſt cruel Suggeſtions, fly with haſte to the Embraces and Arms of God, longing and panting after him; nay, the warmth of your deſires may be ſo great, as that you will, even as it were, melt away in flaming Zeal. Pſalm 84. 2. *My ſoul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my fleſh crieth out for the living God.* And Pſal. 119. 20. *My ſoul breaketh for the longing it hath to thy commandments. Hope deferred makes the heart ſick.* Prov. 13. 12. An eager deſire of abſent amiable Good, raiſes an agreeable Senſation, and ſomewhat of Diſorder in the Natural Spirits; they are heated and ſtirred up with more vigour through the vehemence with which they move, tho this does very much

abate their ſtrength, and occaſion that which we call fainting. Such is the Sympathy that the Soul hath with its deareſt Body, that when the Soul meets with an Object ſuitable, it is filled with warm Affections, and fills the Body either with ſadder, or more chearful Spirits, as it finds reaſons of Sadneſs or of Joy. Tho theſe deſires of holy Men after God, do not always burn with an equal Flame; for in Deſertions, in ſome very perplexing Difficulty, or in great bodily Indiſpoſition and Sickneſs, they are damped, and cannot uſually be ſo quick, ſo chearful, and ſo ſenſible as at other times, tho even then they may be very ſincere and acceptable; for in ſo gloomy a time, one Groan that comes from an humble heart may go up to God in as grateful a manner, as many long Prayers at another ſeaſon. And in your deſires after his Favour, you will have regard to theſe two things.

1. *You will remember what it was that once heightned your deſires*, and endeavour *by the ſame means to quicken them when they begin to languiſh.* You will often conſider what perfection in God it was, whether his Goodneſs, his Mercy, his Truth, his unchangeable Faithfulneſs, or the like; or what promiſe in the Scripture, or what Act of Providence towards you, it was that warmed your hearts. And apply your ſelves again to the ſame profitable methods; you will often recollect what paſſages they were in Sermons that you heard, or in the good Books that you read, that gave you the firſt amiable Senſe of God.

2. *You*

2. *You will carefully obſerve what it is that cools and damps your deſires.* What Paſſion, what worldly Pleaſure, what vain Company, what fooliſh Hopes, what tormenting Cares, what enſlaving Fears; and avoid all theſe as much as in you lies. You will avoid thoſe Snares that intangled you, thoſe Tentations that have clipt your Wings, and made you, when you were ſoaring aloft, to fall to this Earth again. Whatever ſecret Sin it was that weakned your holy Breathing after God, or what omiſſion of Duty it was that eſtranged him from you, and immediately begin to mortifie that Sin, and to ſet upon that Duty; tho when we have done all we can, there will be a vaſt difference between what we are, and what we ought to be; between our longing, and the moſt Glorious Object after which we are to long. But do we find no more any pleaſure in our old Luſts? Do we find our Hearts dead to this deceitful World, and to thoſe Objects that once we called Amiable, and to which we ſacrificed our time, our endeavours, our morning and our evening Thoughts? Do the things that heretofore we moſt admired, now ſeem leſs elegible? Does all that we called beautiful, ſeem deformed when compared with God himſelf? Can every one of us ſincerely ſay to our moſt beloved Sins, and to the enjoyments of this World, I once indeed over-admired you, but I will never do ſo again for ever. I bid you all farwell, never pretend to a ſhare in my Affections, for I have now found a better good, I have long purſued you to no purpoſe; now in finding God, I have found a

ſure, a ſmooth, and a near way to reſt: you have cheated me with vain Deluſions too oft, but you ſhall cheat me no more; for it is to God that I offer up my heart, tho with grief that I loved him no ſooner, when he is ſo infinitely good and amiable.

VI. *If you have this favour of God to be Life to you at preſent, then you have felt by experience, what a miſerable thing it is to be without him.* Tho as there is a wonderful variety in the Works of God in Nature, ſo there is no leſs in thoſe of Grace. His Favour is not communicated in all reſpects the ſame way; tho all are redeemed by the Blood of the ſame Redeemer, yet ſome ſhall groan under the painful Senſe of their Chains and Captivity much longer than others. In ſome, the New Birth is produced by his gentle Hand in a little time, and others have it not till after many dreadful Pangs and Agonies. Some get to Heaven with much fewer Conflicts than others do, that are travelling to the ſame place. This Variety is admirable and very wiſe, tho we diſcern not the reaſons of it. But yet all that are bleſſed with the Favour of God, cannot without aſtoniſhment ſurvey the hideous Darkneſs, and the woful Danger in which they lay before this glorious Sun was pleaſed to ſhine. Oh! what would have become of me for ever, ſaith ſuch an one, if he had ſuffered me to follow my own Choice, and to take my own Courſe, and to have my own Deſires, when I was running even to the Gates of Hell. I now indeed ſee my ſad eſtate as it then was; but,

oh!

oh! what would have become of me, had he ſuffered me to continue in my fatal Slumbers on the edge of Ruin? If I had dreamed on, and had not awaked before the dreadful blow of Death, where would then my lot have been? How many thouſand Miſeries was I under, and did not perceive my Bondage, nor feel my Miſery? Death was creeping on me, Hell was gaping to receive me, the Law curſt me, the Devil led me Captive, and I knew it not, and in this woful poſture did he find me; I was polluted, and caſt out, and helpleſs, and in my Blood, and then *be ſaid unto me, Live, Ezek.* 16. and made the time of my Danger, and my Provocation, to be a time of Love. So great a Change, and ſo happy a Revolution deſerves indeed a frequent and thankful Remembrance. It does give a mighty pleaſure to the Soul to find it ſelf ſafe, when it was even in the Jaws of the roaring Lyon ready to be torn in pieces, when the Arm of the Almighty reſcued the endangered', and the trembling Prey. It is not with a greater pleaſure that a ſick Man, who has been long confined with inexpreſſible Pain, and at the very door of the Grave, thinks of his preſent Health and Life. A Mariner that hath eſcaped Shipwrack, the Dangers of the Sea, and upon a Plank, or broken piece of the Ship, with great hardſhip and difficulty is got to Land, does not with a greater Calmneſs look upon the Waves, and that Sea that had like to have ſwallowed him up, then ſuch a Sinner looks upon his former Miſeries, and his preſent Priviledge; his former Enmity

to

to God, and his preſent Reconciliation with him.

2. *It may be you have experienced, that nothing in all the World is ſo very terrible as his withdrawing from you.* Have you not found it to be a Puniſhment much greater than bodily Pain, or Sickneſs, or any Temporal Calamity? That the loſs of your deareſt Friend, your kindeſt and moſt comfortable Relation, was much more tolerable than ſuch a loſs as this: to loſe the ſenſe of his Favour after you once enjoyed it, has not this loſs been to you, even as Hell it ſelf; or like the departure of *Adam* out of Paradiſe, after he had once beheld the Beauties, and taſted the Pleaſure of that amiable Place? What Fear, what Anxiety, and what Conſternation did ſeize upon him, when he was to be kept from it, never more to ſee the Tree of Life, never more to walk in that moſt delightful Garden, nor to ſee Angels viſiting his ſweet Habitation, as they once uſed to do? And have you not been poſſeſſed with as great a fear, when you have thought that God for your Iniquities was turned your Enemy! I could bear any other Affliction, ſays the *poor deſerted Soul*; but to be forſaken of God, is ſo terrible, that I cannot bear it. How can I ſee Frowns in his Face, and live? I have had many Diſappointments, and Vexations, and Croſſes, and in all theſe I could lift up my Head, and hope; but now I am deſtroyed on every ſide, and my hope is gone. Heretofore, when the World had uſed me ill, I could go to the Throne of Grace, and my heavenly Father would give my weary Soul pleaſant entertainment, and ſpeak comfortably

to

to me; but now he does not viſit and refreſh me as he uſed to do; and his bleſſed Face that I once ſaw with peace, is now hid and covered with a Cloud. I have my former worldly Comforts, my Friends, and my Eſtate; but alas, my God is gone, and what do theſe avail! I once read his Word with Joy, and now it fills me with Gall and Wormwood. I once ſat under his Shadow with great delight, and his Fruit was pleaſant to my taſte; but now I am athirſt, and have nothing wherewith to quench my thirſt. I am now ſcorcht with heat, and have no Shelter, no cool ſhady Retirement where I may fly for eaſe. Job 23. 8, 9. *Behold I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he doth hide himſelf on the right hand that I cannot ſee him.* You will moſt earneſtly pray againſt ſo ſad a ſtate as this is, if you have ever experienced the Favour of God to be your Life. Oh Lord! hide not thy ſelf from my poor Soul; whatever elſe I looſe, let me not loſe thee and thy Love. Do not hold me for thine Enemy, nor let thy Terrors fall upon me; do not caſt me off, O my Father, tho I have been very diſobedient. And if God depart, your mourning for his abſence will be like the mourning of a Mother for the death of an only Son, or like the ſadneſs of ſo many poor Children that bewail a loſt Father; they are left deſtitute, and can do nothing without his advice and help. You will follow your God with Tears and Supplications, and ſay with Chriſt in great agony, but with great Faith

Faith, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me!* Why doſt thou forget the Work of thine own hands? *Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I am weak*; why doſt thou leave me in this doleful Wilderneſs where no Water is, to be a prey to Satan and mine own Fears? I have indeed wandered about, ſeeking reſt, and find none; put out thy loving hand, and guide me to thy ſelf. I have indeed deſerv'd this uſage, for thou waſt with me, and I did not value thy preſence; thou didſt call, but I did not obey thy voice; thou didſt ſtand at my Door, but I ſhut thee out; wo, wo unto me that I have ſinned; wo unto me, that I did not improve thy Grace, thy Preſence, and thy Love, as I ſhould have done. But tho I have been a Prodigal, thou art a Father ſtill; and tho I have not done as becomes a Child, yet I will return to thee, becauſe thou wilt not caſt off the comfortable Name of a Father. Thus, I ſay, do thoſe that have had experience of God's favour mourn for his abſence? Their Spirits are like the tender Flowers that hang their heads when the Sun is ſet, and they walk more diſconſolately than any Subject can be ſuppoſed to do: who after having once ſhared in the peculiar Graces of his Prince, ſees him at length, becauſe of his Crimes, to look upon him with a ſevere, or a leſs favourable eye.

VII. *If you enjoy the Favour of God, you will have a great value for his Word, for the Spirit, and the Blood of Chriſt*: For his Word, as diſcovering to you this God; and perſuading you by many comfortable

comfortable Promiſes and Entreaties to accept of him; and not only ſo, but conveying to you ſaving light and knowledge, with its great and powerful efficacy. You will love the Word, becauſe of the many Supports and Conſolations which you have received from it; you will love it as the Rule of your Duty, and all its Precepts will be dear to you, as conveying to you life and ſtrength: you will love it ſo, as to read it often, ſo as to meditate upon it, and to lay it up in your hearts: you will love it as the Inſtrument of your Regeneration; and rejoice in it not only for a ſeaſon, but for ever. You will value and obey the Spirit that ſets home revealed truths upon your hearts; and when you were deſtitute of this life, convinced you of your miſerable ſtate, and reſtored vigor and motion to thoſe Faculties of yours that were ſtupified and benumbed; chaſing away their ancient darkneſs, and guiding them to their proper Objects; and cauſing thoſe Objects ſo diſcovered, to produce glorious effects in your once barren Souls. You will alſo prize all the Ordinances of God, in which you may have communion with him; as Prayer, Hearing, Meditation, and the like; and it will leave a ſenſible grief upon your minds, when you miſs of theſe Ordinances by your own fault.

VIII. *You will be very humble and heavenly minded.* His Favour fills all his Servants with the loweſt, and moſt ſelf-abaſing thoughts; you will never ſpeak of him, but in terms full of reſpect; never pray to him, but with great reverence

rence and veneration: the nearer acceſs you have to him, the more will you diſcern of his Infinite Holineſs and Purity, and how vile you are when compared with him: you will wonder at his Condeſcentions; and caſt down your Crowns before the Throne; and imitate his humble Language in 2 *Sam.* 9. 7, 8. when *David* told *Mephiboſheth*, *Thou ſhalt eat bread at my Table continually*; *he bowed himſelf, and ſaid, What is thy ſervant, that thou ſhouldſt look upon ſuch a dead dog as I am!* This will cauſe you to admire the diſtinguiſhing Grace of God that is vouchſafed to you, more than to many others in the World; great numbers whereof are buried in Ignorance, or open Idolatry, and the reſt in Profaneneſs or Hypocriſy; many, it may be, are paſſed by in the ſame Families where you live; and whilſt you are alive, your next Neighbour, perhaps, is dead: And then, if you have obtained this Favour, you will be heavenly minded; your Treaſure, and your Hearts, will be above; you will taſte and reliſh ſpiritual and divine things; and never be more pleaſed, than when you are leaſt earthly and carnal: and this holy temper will be your comfort and ſecurity againſt the Temptations of *Satan*, and the Evils of this lower World, as thoſe Birds that ſoar aloft are out of the danger of Guns, and the Snare of the Fowler, who catches thoſe that fly nearer to the ground.

IX. *You may then know that you have the Favour of God, if you are induſtrious and zealous in the performance of all holy Duties*: If you perform them not

not only from the force of awakening convictions, but from love and delight; if you refuse no service that may glorify him, though it seem to thwart your worldly Interest, and to be painful to the Flesh; and it is impossible but to find a very calm and chearful progress in your obedience, when you know that God accepts what you do. As it is a mighty encouragement to the labour of a Servant, when he sees that his Master is very well pleased with his work: Darkness, you know, with its many Inconveniences, does greatly put a stop to diligence, which yet is quickned and excited by the return of Light. So if God's Countenance shine upon you, it will make you not only to walk uprightly, but even to run the way of his Commandments with enlarged hearts; *Psal.* 119. and you will associate with such as are serious, holy Persons; for the living do not use to take pleasure in being among the dead.

X. And Lastly, *If this Favour of God be your Life, it will make you patiently to long for Heaven.* This Favour will be sweeter to your taste than *honey, or the honey-comb:* it will yield a more delightful relish to your renewed Appetite, than all the Joys of this World: the little drops that now and then refresh your hearts, will cause you to pant for those Rivers of Pleasures that are at his Right-hand for evermore. Are you weary of sinning? weary of your imperfect Faith, and Hope, and Love? Does the prospect that you have of God at this distance, render him so amiable to your Souls, that you would fain be with

with him where he is? Are you ſo ſenſible of the evil of your Sin, that you would fain be in that place where you ſhall ſin no more for ever? where your panting Soul ſhall have all its longings turned into an eternal Complacence and Delight? You will often lift up to Heaven your longing eyes, and ſend thither many a fervent wiſh; ſaying with *David*, *Oh! when ſhall I come and appear before God!* Pſal. 42. 2. When will it be that I ſhall ſee his glorious Face, and feel beyond all doubt that I am loved of him, and that I love him better than I now do! where the joys of hope ſhall be turned into fruition, and when that which I have now but in the promiſe, I ſhall have in the ſweeteſt and moſt comfortable poſſeſſion! When ſhall I be near his Throne, and ſee that glorious Majeſty that I have adored! When ſhall I ſee that Face, all ſerene, and have no black or mournful Cloud to interpoſe between my God and me for ever! Oh that I might join in the Hallelujahs of the Bleſſed! Oh that I were in that Land of eternal Light and Joy, and in that agreeable Society of Holy Souls, who have already ſhot the gulph, and reſt from all their labours, for I am weary with beholding Vanity. Theſe, and ſuch like, will be the motions of an holy Soul; for its warfare with Sin, the World, and the Devil, is ſo painful, that it cannot but deſire to be releas'd. Its Ignorance is ſo great, that it cannot but long to be overſpread with pure and eternal Light. *The Captive exile haſteneth that he may be looſed, and that he ſhould not die in the pit, nor that his bread ſhould fail;*

Iſa. 51. 14.

But

But then this longing must be attended with patience; for we may sin even in desiring Heaven, when we desire it with too much precipitancy and haste; and in this, good men are many times very much to blame; many times when a Person meets with some heavy sickness, or some very troublesome affliction, he is apt to say, Oh that God would now take me to Heaven! there is a great deal of self-love in this; and our Nature, when it finds it self oppreſt, would fain be at ease; but we must not forget, that we must bear the Cross, and suffer, before it will be our time to reign. We must hold on in our Race, though the Weather be foul and stormy: many thousand pains may be our Lot, ere God will call us hence; and the first thing that we are to desire, is, that we may have faith, and submission wherewith to bear those Pains, and to persevere till he be pleased to call us. Some indeed he is pleased to dismiss from this Earth to his Heaven, as on the sudden; but if you consider, you will find the greatest part of his Servants have long troubles, manifold Agonies, tedious Conflicts, and heavy Pains, before they come to that Glory; and in this respect, they find the Gate that leads to Life to be very strait and narrow. The Land of Promise is indeed a pleasant Land; it flows with Milk and Honey; but there are many Gyants to conquer in our way thither: your desires of Heaven cannot be truly regular, unless you be content to glorify him by suffering, as well as by the doing of his Will. And even with patience there may be an earnest and affe-

ctionate deſire to be with God; and thus ſome of the Saints have breathed out their Prayers; Oh time! run faſt, and remove days and hours out of the way, that I may enjoy, for ever enjoy the beloved of my Soul! Farewel all ye my Friends and Relations, for I am going to better Friends: Farewel all my temporal Poſſeſſions, for I am now going to be poſſeſſed of an Inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fades not away: Farewel eating, and drinking, and ſleeping, and all my pleaſures and recreations; for I am now going to the Supper of the Lamb, and ſhall not need theſe weak ſupports of frail Nature any more. And others have cried out, Oh, my God! let me not ſtill be in darkneſs, and provoke thee, and hazard my Salvation, and pleaſe the Devil, and add ſin to ſin! Oh why is my deſire ſtill unſatisfied! When ſhall I have nothing more to wiſh for! when will it once be, that I ſhall be delivered! Oh, come Lord, leſt I be weary of my work and duty; leſt my Graces be like poor tired Soldiers, that fall into confuſions, and ſo loſe the day. Happy is the man that loves thee above all; happy is the man whoſe hope and truſt is in Thee; but moſt happy is he that is with Thee, where I alſo long to be.

Thus I have finiſhed the Application. And I hope there are ſeveral of my Readers, whoſe Conſciences, after ſuch a tryal, do ſalute them with happy tidings, and ſay, You are thoſe that have God's Favour. And oh what happy People are all ſuch! happy ſhall they be in life, happy in their death, and happy for evermore.

Some

Some will ſay, Happy are the men that are rich and great, that have thriving Trades, numerous Attendants, and ſwelling Titles; that have plenty of Gold and Silver; that need take no care how to live, and are freed from all the pinching anxieties of a poor and a low Eſtate; *Pſal.* 144. 15. It may be ſaid to every ſuch perſon in the Language of the Angel *Gabriel* to the bleſſed Virgin; *Hail thou that art highly favoured! the Lord is with thee*, Luke 1. 28. and in v. 30. *Fear not, Mary, for thou haſt found favour with God.* And what indeed can they fear, whoſe Friend he is, that is ſo good, and ſo powerful!

CHAP. VIII.

Of the ſeveral Privileges that belong to thoſe who have God's Favour.

Conſ. 1. *When you have this Favour, all your ſins are pardoned:* Your God will not remember your Iniquities any more: All the Vanities of your Childhood and Youth, all your Omiſſions and your Commiſſions ſhall not riſe againſt you to condemn you: Tho you have often quenched the Holy Spirit, and ſtifled his Convictions; yet all this, and many thouſands of other ſins that made you dead in Law, ſhall be blotted out; all your ſins of Ignorance, and all thoſe that have been done againſt Light, and Love, and Knowledge, ſhall all be covered by this Grace of God.

2. *All your Prayers ſhall be heard.* Being pardoned, and your guilt removed, you will have *acceſs with boldneſs unto God*; who will give you either the very things you deſire, or thoſe that are better, of another kind: Your Perſons are acceptable, and ſo will all you Duties be, and therefore ſucceſsful, becauſe Chriſt is your Interceſſor: who, as he hath once purchaſed Life for you with his Blood, will apply it to you for your further purification; *Heb.* 9. 11, 14. Nay, you will not only prevail for mercies for your ſelves, but being Favourites in the Court of Heaven, you will be in a capacity to obtain many bleſſings for others too: *Matt.* 18. 19. *If two of you ſhall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they ſhall ask, it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.* God, as one ſays, ſometimes ſtands upon a number of Voices, for the carrying of ſome publick Mercy, becauſe he delighteth in the harmony of many praying Souls; and alſo loves to oblige and gratify many in the anſwer and return of the ſame Prayer. And therefore it is our duty to beg the prayers of thoſe that we think good People, becauſe of their intereſt in God. Many *ſeek the Rulers favour*, Prov. 29. 26. their wants, and their ambition puſh them forward, and make them very complaiſant and reſpectful to ſuch, in whoſe power it is to do them conſiderable kindneſſes; and they make a peculiar addreſs to ſuch as are principal Favourites; and it is reckoned as a main ſtep to Promotion, to have a Friend in Court; it is to our great advantage to be remembred in the Prayers of thoſe that ſhare in God's Favour.

3. *When*

3. *When you are the Favourites of God, he will accept your ſincere ſervices, though they be mingled with many failings.* The meaneſt Oblations that you lay upon his Altar, ſhall be grateful; while the more pompous and coſtly Sacrifices of others ſhall be diſeſteemed: your inward groans ſhall move his tender heart ſooner than their howlings and their loudeſt cries. *Prov.* 15. 8. He will cheriſh your feebleſt breathings after him, and add more ſtrength to the bruiſed Reed, and more flame to the ſmoaking Flax: He will regiſter your good Actions, and not upbraid you with your evil ones. There was *ſome good thing in Abijah toward the Lord God of Iſrael, in the houſe of Jeroboam*, 1 Kings 14. 12. and he took peculiar notice of it: and at the laſt day Our Lord mentions the Charities, and the Bounties of his People, which they themſelves had forgot long ago. He will not reject your Faith, though there be many doubts mingled with it; nor caſt off your deſires, though they have a great deal of deadneſs, and want many further degrees of life and fervour: He will remember his Covenant, tho' you forget your Duty: *Mal.* 3. 17. *I will ſpare them, as a man ſpareth his own ſon that ſerveth him.*

4. *God will either preſerve you from outward dangers, or give you ſtrength to bear them:* He will *be afflicted in all your afflictions*, and tenderly regard you as the Apple of his Eye. What can you fear, whilſt you have ſo great a Defender! what may you not hope for, when you have ſo good a Benefactor! as he ſaid to *Abraham*, Gen. 14. 2. *Fear not, I am thy ſhield, and thy exceeding great*

reward: A Reward to quicken your ſervice, and a Shield to keep you from hurt in the day of battel. Or as in *Dan.* 10. 19. *O man, greatly beloved! fear not, peace be unto thee, be ſtrong, yea, be ſtrong.* What ſafety muſt he needs have, that had the Almighty for his Helper! what honour muſt he have, whom an Angel called greatly beloved!

5. *He will keep you in his favour, that you ſhall not finally be caſt away.* Though you be ſaved as by fire, and by great difficulty, yet you ſhall ſurely be ſaved. He may ſuſpend his Influences, but he will not change his Covenant; he may be angry, but he will not be ſo for ever: You may fall, and bruiſe your ſelves, but his gentle hand will heal your wounds; *Rom.* 8. *ult.* He that loved you when you were Prodigals, will not ſhut you out when you return home again; He that pitied you in your blood, will not reject you when his Image is upon you, though ſullied with manifold defects: Your Life is hid with him in Chriſt; and though by various tentations and troubles it is weakned, yet it ſhall ſpring forth again. Chriſt is the Vine, whereof you are the Branches: though your Life is expoſed to many ſtorms, yet in him 'tis very ſafe; and you ſhall not expire by a total death, becauſe Chriſt himſelf will never die: the Faithfulneſs of God, and the Life of Chriſt, are both unchangeable Supports to you: you need not fear the rage of your Enemies, while your Saviour is your Guide; for he will bring forth Judgment unto Victory.

Sixthly,

Sixthly, and *Laſtly*, God will be your God; his Wiſdom and his Power will direct and ſave you. Could I tell the Tradeſman that is ſetting up, that I could help him to a plentiful Trade; could I aſſure the Merchant of the ſucceſful arrival of his Ships; could I tell the Poor how to be rich; and the Rich how to get all that they wiſh for; I ſhould be a very acceptable Meſſenger: but to you that have the Favour of God, here are better tidings! the Lord of Heaven and Earth is yours; and then if you can tell the Stars, or the Sand of the Sea, or the drops of Rain, you may be able to number the Benefits that will accrue to you by ſuch a Privilege: whatſoever is truly uſeful to your ſpiritual welfare, whatever in in all the large Dominions of God, will do you good, you ſhall be ſure to receive; God the Father will be your Reconciled Father; God the Son your Mediator; God the Holy Ghoſt your Sanctifier: You ſhall in no diſtreſs want an Alſufficient and Almighty Friend; you ſhall have all your holy Prayers heard and granted; Life and Death ſhall be yours; the Mercy of God will relieve you when you are in miſery; 2 *Cor.* 6. 18. *I will be a father to you, and ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord Almighty:* And he will ſay, as in *Jer.* 32.41. *I will rejoice over them to do them good, with my whole heart, and my whole ſoul.* To be a Child of a King, ſounds great, and carries with it an high degree of honour; but to be the Children of the King of kings, is infinitely more honourable; to have ſo great a Father, is an unſpeakable, and a mighty Privilege: All the Dig-

nities that Ambitious Courtiers ſeek with all their Cringing Arts, are but little Trifles, when compared with this: all the Renown that Soldiers purchaſe with their ſweat and blood, is but diſgrace, when compared with the glory of being a Son or Daughter of the moſt High God. If the Queen of *Sheba*, when ſhe beheld *Solomon*, that in the ſplendor of his Court, and the wiſdom of his Actions, exceeded all the Report that ſhe had heard before, cried out with wonder, 1 *King.* 10. 8. *Happy are thy men, and happy are theſe thy ſervants which ſtand continually before thee, and that hear thy wiſdom!* How much more may we ſay, Happy are the Servants of the Living God; that ſerve him day and night, that wait at his Temple, and that ſing his Praiſes; that ſee with what wiſdom he manages all the great Affairs of his vaſt and large Kingdom; and that the ſame eye that is in the Wheels, does watch for them, and all is carried on with a peculiar reſpect to his Glory, and to their Salvation: the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is their Father, the Angels are their Guard, the Spirit is their Teacher, Afflictions are their Phyſick; 1 *Cor.* 3. 21. *All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas; the ſtars that are in the right hand of Chriſt ſhine to give them light. The World is theirs*, ſo much of it as is neceſſary to promote their real welfare. *Life is theirs*, wherein to prepare for happineſs; and *Death is theirs*, to convey them to it. *They are Chriſt's*, his Brethren, and his Subjects; and *Chriſt is God's*, who is delighted with his Son, and with them in him. This is the privilege of a Favourite of God.

God. He is now, it may be, poor and low, affronted and diſgraced; but the day draws near, when the ſame perſon that is diſeſteem'd by the Sons of Pride, ſhall be owned of his Great Lord: clothed with Garments of Praiſe, and led out in triumph, and applauding-Angels ſay to the grief of the Wicked, *Thus ſhall it be done to the man whom the King of heaven delights to honour.* Thus you have ſet before you that which is Life indeed; a Life that ſhall never cloſe with Death: keep your mind full of theſe pleaſant Ideas, endeavour to get a greatneſs of ſoul, that may not ceaſe aſpiring after theſe glorious Privileges; and look with contempt upon all other Grandeur and Magnificence. Having ſeen how honourable it is to be favoured by the Lord of Hoſts; Let us all reſolve, that we will never admire this vain World any more; for we have now diſcerned a better World.

The End of the Second Part.

A DISCOURSE Concerning TROUBLE of MIND, AND THE DISEASE of MELANCHOLY.

PART III.

PSAL. XXX. 5.

Weeping may endure for a night; but joy cometh in the morning.

CHAP. I.

Of the many miſeries of this mortal Life, that are the uſual occaſions of ſorrow to the Sons of Men; with reſpect both to their bodies and ſouls.

1. THE *Life of Man is full of ſorrow*; which yet is not ſo to be underſtood, as that it is in every part full of darkneſs and calamity: We have, indeed, ſtormy days, but then we have fair weather too; we have not only the ſharpneſs of the Winter that pierces us with its Cold

Cold, and Froſts, and Snow; but we have the mild and the favourable Summer afterwards, that cauſes all the whole frame of Nature to rejoice, and brings to us many grateful pleaſant things, that gives us occaſion to praiſe the Wiſdom of our Maker, that has made a World ſo beautiful wherein we are to dwell; That has provided for us all innumerable Comforts, not only ſuch as are abſolutely neceſſary to maintain our Life, but ſuch as may give us delight, and recreate our ſenſe. We can no way turn our Eyes, but they behold wonders of his goodneſs, his Sun, his Moon, and his Stars, whoſe influences are for our benefit, as well as for his Glory; give us daily cauſe, to ſay with *David*, *Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him!* He does not willingly grieve the Children of Men, he does not make us always to weep, but affords us frequent occaſions of rejoicing; whereas all our time might be as one Rainy day, from the riſing of our Sun to its going down; but his Providence does permit us however to be laden with many Miſeries before we come to another World: And let us take a view of them; for it will be uſeful to ſubdue our Pride, to keep us from Vain-glory, to make us to remember that we are not at Home, that here is not our Reſt, and that we ought earneſtly to deſire a better State.

1. *Let us conſider Man in his firſt arrival in the World, or in his Infant-ſtate:* And there we diſcern this ſame Creature, that in his after years makes ſo great a noiſe and buſtle in the World,

VVorld, to be a poor helpleſs thing, that is no way able to cheriſh the newly begun Life, nor to keep the Candle that is lighted, from expiring the ſame minute wherein it began to ſhine. Man comes crying into the VVorld; an action very ſuitable to him, at the entrance into a VVorld whoſe pleaſures are floating and tranſcient, but whoſe griefs are very ſure. Other Creatures are endued with inſtincts and inclinations for their own preſervation, and know in ſome meaſure, as ſoon as they begin to live, how to maintain their own Life; but Man of all others is moſt deſtitute and helpleſs in this reſpect, he is ſo tender and ſo frail, that the leaſt cold or dangers do more eaſily affect him. Tho God has put that great love into Parents, that they do, as well as they can, ſupport and comfort and help their Children, and with his bleſſing, and their own great care and labour, they make a ſhift to rear theſe little Plants. But then there are abundance of diſeaſes that begin to ſet upon the new-born Creatures, Convulſions and other pains which greatly torment and vex them; but which they are not able to expreſs, and which we do not know: But we are ſure they begin betimes to weep and to be ſorrowful, and their pains and ſorrows make their Parents alſo to be afflicted and to weep with them; when they ſee their miſeries, indeed, but cannot help them. This ſoft and tender Age is eaſily troubled and diſquieted, every little thing troubles and moleſts them; ſo that the firſt hour of the night, in which we travel when we begin to live, is an hour of ſorrow.

2. *When*

2. *When we are got over the weakneſs of our Infant-ſtate, and begin to have more ſtrength, and Reaſon dawns a little*, and yields us a little light to guide our ſelves, That Light is mingled with darkneſs; our ſmall skill hath abundance of imprudence, and we run into a thouſand dangers that we do not ſee, and thoſe dangers make us to weep and to be ſorrowful; our careleſs youth is full of miſeries, and the blooming Roſe has many Thorns about it. When our Reaſon begins to diſplay it ſelf with our increaſing-years, then the ſeveral tasks that are ſet us, the ſeveral things we are obliged to learn in order to a good and well-improved Education, bring forth grief and pain; our unwillingneſs to Labour, and the Corrections that we meet with if we do it not, do both afflict us; our Ignorance is our miſery, and the difficulties that are planted about the Tree of Knowledg, do fright and vex us. Many of our early days are ſpent in digging for this hidden treaſure, and which we cannot find, but with a vaſt toil and ſweating for it; and which when we have found, does not ſatisfy. It's true, indeed, our firſt youth has to ſweeten it, many pleaſures, many recreations and diverſions, and we are then void of the many Cares of Life that afterwards do pierce our hearts; but even then we are ſo confident and ſo fooliſh, ſo apt to truſt our own underſtandings, and ſo backward to receive the advice of others who are more experienced, that we do often wound our ſelves, and ſow thoſe ſeeds of ſorrow that yield us an uncomfortable Harveſt many years after-

afterwards: And when in our freer time we come to reflect upon what we have done, that reflection makes us weep, to think that we have done ſo little for God, or for our own Souls; and that we loſt ſo great a part of our Age in Trifles and Vanities: For we can then ſay, by ſad experience, *Childhood and youth are vanity*, Eccleſ. 11. 10. The Joys that we then were pleaſed with, are paſt and gone; but the Wounds that we then received, do many times ſmart and bleed afreſh.

3. *When we have got the yoak of our Maſters and Inſtructors off our necks*, and begin to manage and guide our ſelves and our Actions, then we have many ſorrows ſtill.

And that 1. *With reference to the Common Affairs of Life.*

2. *With reſpect to knowledg and underſtanding.*

1. *With reference to the Common Affairs of Life:* They are uſually very many; they bring along with them a huge Train of Cares, of grave anxieties and ſollicitude; if Men have no imployment or buſineſs, they grieve for the want of it; and if they be imployed, they are hurried, and diſturb'd, and grieved and vexed; they meet with many people that are falſe and treacherous, with many buſineſſes that are intricate and perplexed; and thus their plodding Heads are ſtung with Cares, and their Breaſts with ſorrow, all groaning under the Curſe, and proving the puniſhment to be true, That in the ſweat of his Brows Man muſt eat his Bread, *Gen.* 3. Eccleſ. 2. 23. *All his days are* for-

ſorrows, and his travel, grief: yea, his heart taketh not reſt in the night. This is alſo vanity. All his drudgery and his toyl is to ſmall purpoſe, it is, indeed, vanity, when a Man deprives himſelf of *ſleep*, *the ſweet repoſe of Nature*, and next to the Grace of God, the greateſt bleſſing in the World. The Poor are almoſt every where ſhedding Tears of Impatience and Diſcontent for the ſtraitneſs of their Circumſtances; they are mourning becauſe they are like to want what would bear their Charges to the Grave; and the Rich are troubled how to ſecure the Riches they enjoy, and fear to loſe them, as many have done before; for they cannot live long, but they ſhall ſee many whom a few days, and ſome unforeſeen Accidents have brought from the greaeſt heights to the loweſt poverty; whom the Riſing-Sun found rejoicing, and whom he left, for their ſudden miſeries, plunged in Tears. How many Foreheads do you ſee covered with a Cloud of grief, for their Loſſes and their Diſappointments! Look into the Country-fields, there you ſee toyling at the Plow and Sythe; * Look into the Waters, there you ſee tugging at Oars and Cables; Look into the City, there you ſee a throng of Cares, and hear ſorrowful complaints of bad times, and the decay of Trade; Look into Studies, and there you ſee paleneſs and infirmities, and fixed Eyes; Look unto the Court, and there are defeated Hopes, Envyings, Underminings, and tedious attendance; all things are full of Labour, and Labour is full of Sorrow; and theſe two are inſeparably joyned with the miſerable Life of Man.

* Bp. *Hall*, Vol. 1. P. 451.

3. In

3. In the next place, consider *the miseries of the Body of Man*, that make him to weep and mourn: Persons of weak constitutions are liable to tedious and languishing pains that afflict them for many months together; and those that are of a stronger temper, to such that are so sharp and so violent, that they dispatch them it may be in a week or two. Man is seldom without pain, and always near to sickness, to sickness that will make him groan and sigh whether he will or not; and some sickness which is *all sorrow throughout*, such as *Melancholly*, which is all sad, and has not one bright or clear side, all disconsolate and grievous, stagnating the Blood, changing the brisk and chearful motion of the Spirits, and fixing the Mind unavoidably upon amazing and dreadful objects. So is that of *Job* verified, *His flesh upon him shall have pain, and his soul within him shall mourn*, Job 14. last. The several Seasons of the year have their inconveniencies, which annoy poor mortal men; not only the Winter-quarter (as one expresses it) is full of storms, and cold, and darkness; but the beauteous Spring hath Storms and sharp Frosts; the fruitful teeming Summer is melted with heat, and choaked with dust; and the Autumn is full of sickness. And how can the Eyes but shed innumerable Tears, when they consider the doleful pains to which they themselves, and all the other parts of the body are exposed! How can the Man but groan, to find himself present in such a Body, from which he cannot for many painful years be dislodged, and in which he has no delight

or eaſe! What grief is it to him to have no help or relief, when his ſpirits are broken, and his heart is overwhelmed? To have many cutting afflictions upon him, and the fear of more to come! Eccleſ. 8. 6, 7. *To every purpoſe there is time and judgment: and therefore the miſery of man is great upon him. For he knoweth not that which ſhall be: for who can tell him when it ſhall be?* To be daily dying in anguiſh and vexation, and not to be able to die! To be ſurrounded with Troops of Diſeaſes, of Agues, Fevers, Conſumptions, Cholick, Gout, Stone, and not to be able to keep any of theſe off, nor to run away from them when they come!

4. Add to all theſe natural ſorrows, ſuch as are diſtributed by God in Judgment: Such are the Tyrants that God ſuffers long to Flouriſh and to Triumph in the World, that tread upon the necks of others to advance themſelves; and glut themſelves with the Blood of the Innocent; daring to do what is moſt unjuſt, to gratify their Lawleſs Ambition, and their Luſtful deſire of Empire; and from them and their arbitrary deſigns, flow innumerable injuries, and wrongs, and robberies, and miſchief, *Eccl.* 4. 1. Then the other Judgments; Plagues and Famine, ſpreading Contagions, or Bloody Wars; Plagues that at the ſame time ſeize and kill; that Conquer whereever they come, and ſend Thouſands of miſerable mortals to the Grave on a ſudden; that tear the Children from their Mothers Breaſts; that ſeparate one part of the Family from another, and make them afraid of each others Company; or elſe

ſend

ſend them together to the Houſe prepared for all Living; that turn flouriſhing Cities into ſolitudes, and put a ſtop to all Commerce and Trade. Or Famine, that kills by as ſure, but by ſlower methods; That makes them to know they are dying before they die; That cauſes them to walk to and fro with pale, and meagre, and drooping looks, and turns a fruitful Land into barrenneſs, where the poor ſtarving Children come begging to their Mothers for Bread, and they have none to give; but are forced to ſee them die before their Eyes, as *Lam.* 4. Or War, where many Children are deprived of their Fathers, many Wives of their Husbands, many that lived plentifully, bereaved of all their dear and pleaſant things; War, which fills every place with Blood and Violence, with Noiſe and Clamour, and Oppreſſion and Woe; That lays Countries waſte and deſolate; and ſacrifices multitudes of harmleſs people to its cruel rage and fury: Theſe are the terrible Voice of God, which will cauſe us to weep, and to be afraid.

5. Conſider *Men as aſſociated together in their ſeveral Relations*, and ſo their ſorrows, and their cauſe of weeping is increaſed. The Courts of Princes have their occaſions of grief and trouble; they grieve, tho their grief be more pompous, and clad in a more ſolemn dreſs. Thoſe that that have a numerous and great Kindred and Alliance, are oftner in Mourning than others; for Death does oftner viſit their greater Friends and Acquaintance. Few Families there are without ſorrow; that Houſe that now

rejoyces, is quickly turn'd into a House of mourning; and where this day there is nothing but the sound of the Timbrel, the Harp, and the Viol; it may be the next day there is the voice of Crying and Lamentation: How many Parents that have long prayed for Children, and have at length obtained them, see them snatcht away with an early stroke, and the flower wither in the blossom that they began to doat upon, and their eyes closed by death as soon as they had but peep'd into the World? and how many do we find in tears, because they do but bring forth Children to the Grave, *and will not be comforted, because they are not*, and find a greater sorrow in parting with them, than in bringing them forth? How many Parents are there, whose Children live several years, to whose Education they contribute all they can, and hope to have them to be the staff and comfort of their Old Age; and when they begin to flourish, a storm comes and blasts the fair and the goodly Fruit; and while they look for abiding joys from their dutiful obedience, and holy conversation, they are forced to follow the promising and hopeful Youths to the Grave; and mourn as *David*, even for a bad Son; *O Absalom! my son! my son! would God I had died for thee! O Absalom! my son! my son!* Nay again, How many Parents are there weeping for the disobedience of their Children, that are like to be the Heirs of Wrath, and to fall into destruction? it costs them many a tear, and a sigh, to think that their Children are Children of the Devil, and Brands of Hell! How does it sink their Souls,

Souls, to ſee, that all their Prayers and Exhortations, and all their coſt and charge, is like to be in vain! What ſorrow can be greater, than to think, that what they have done for them, will aggravate their condemnation; and that they muſt find their Children, their now dear and beloved Children, at the Left-hand of Chriſt in the great day; and the thoughts of this ſends them mourning to the Grave! How many Congregations are there mourning for the death of their faithful Miniſters, whom they ſhall never hear, nor with whom they ſhall never pray more? it grieves them to ſee thoſe Stars ſet, that gave them light; and thoſe Embaſſadors called home, that entreated them to be reconciled! How many Soldiers are bewailing the death of their General, who in the midſt of all his Victories, and their Applauſes, was on a ſudden ſnatcht away!

6. *Death is another occaſion of weeping to the ſons of men* as are alſo many of its violent and quick approaches; *Eccl.* 9. 12. *For man knoweth not his time; as the fiſhes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the ſnare; ſo are the ſons of men ſnared in an evil time, when it cometh ſuddenly upon them.* *Hezekiah* turn'd his face to the wall, and wept, when he had his ſummons to depart: and if ſo good a man was ſo much concern'd, how much more may the generality be ſuppoſed to be concern'd! It is a very melancholly thought to one in fleſh, to think, that he, and his dear Body, muſt ſhortly part; and that the Body, in which he has eat, and drank, and ſlept at eaſe; which has been treated ſo kindly,

and cloathed ſo neatly, ſhall be turned into the Grave, and there in a very hideous manner conſume away. As Children cry when they come into the World, ſo do they generally weep when they go out again. Muſt I, often ſays a dying man, leave you my dear Friends, my comfortable Cildren, my pleaſant Acquaintance, and never ſee you any more! I muſt never eat, nor drink, nor talk with you any more! I muſt not walk in my pleaſant Gardens, nor ſurvey my Habitation, nor viſit my Friends, nor they me, any more for ever! I am going into the cold, and the lonely Grave; and muſt by my ſelf, without your company, travel that unknown and ſolitary path. The change of ſtate, the greatneſs of the next World, and the different way of living out of the Body, and the many dreadful pains that are in their laſt concluding Agonies, make men to ſee the period of Life with weeping eyes; and when they are dying, it diſſolves their Friends to tears to ſee their wan and pale looks, to hear their laſt and dreadful groans; and immediately after death, it melts them to ſee the perſon, with whom a few days before they comfortably diſcours'd, and lived, now changed into a mere lump of Earth; for that Soul that made it active and vigorous, is fled away, when they follow him to the Grave; it troubles them to part; it troubles them to think what their Friend is, and what they themſelves are ſhortly like to be: and when they come home, the Houſe is no more ſo pleaſant as it was; they miſs one that made it to be ſo; and one whom it muſt never know

again

again for ever. Thus mourners not only go about the ſtreet, but are almoſt every-where to be found in every Countrey, and in every Family. *Job* 14. 1. *Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.*

7. *As to his Soul, man is expoſed to abundance of ſorrows:* He labours under a miſerable darkneſs in his underſtanding, and his natural ignorance creates him abundance of trouble and vexation in his ſoul. He has fooliſh hopes, and extravagant deſires, and a vain curioſity of knowing many things which he ſhall never know, and then the light of his underſtanding is apt to be eclipſed and confounded with the irreſiſtible diſeaſes of the body; ſo that it is impoſſible for him to think in ſickneſs after the ſame manner as he uſed to do in health: His Will alſo miniſters to his ſorrow; for he wills and affects abundance of things that are contrary to his real intereſt; and if he have the things that he is apt to will, they give him new torment and diſquiet, and he ſuffers innumerable miſeries, from his precipitant and eager inclinations. Knowledg is the greateſt ornament of a rational ſoul; and yet that hath its troubles, *Eccleſ.* 1. 18. *For in much wiſdom there is much grief, and he that increaſeth wiſdom encreaſeth ſorrow.* It is not to be attained without great pains and difficulties, without laborious and diligent ſearch, and vaſt perplexities. Whether we conſider the blindneſs of our underſtandings, or the intricacy of things themſelves, the many dark receſſes of Nature, the implication of Cauſes and Effects, beſides thoſe acci-

dental difficulties which are occaſioned by the ſubtilty and intanglement of Error. The variety of intricate Opinions, the many involutions of Controverſies and Diſputes, which are apt to whirl a Man about with a Vertigo of contradictory probabilities; and inſtead of ſetling, to amuſe and diſtract the mind; ſo that much ſtudy is a wearifomneſs to the fleſh *; and beſides, it makes a further trouble to the ſoul, in regard the more a Man knows, the more he ſees there is yet to be known; as a Man, the higher he climbs, ſees more and more of the journey that he is to go; and then he that is vers'd in the knowledg of the World, ſees abundance of miſtakes and diſorders which he cannot remedy, and which to behold is very ſad; and by knowing a great deal, is liable to abundance of contradiction and oppoſition from the more peeviſh, and ſelf-willed, and ignorant part of mankind, that are vex'd becauſe he will not think and ſay as they do; and they are very prone to cenſure and condemn the things they do not underſtand, for it is moſt eaſie ſo to do; whereas to pierce into the Reaſons of things, requires a mighty labour, and a ſucceſſion of deliberate and ſerious thoughts, to which the nature of Man is averſe: And lazily and haſtily to judge, requires no trouble; and were it not that it is a man's duty to know, and that his ſoul, if it have any thing of greatneſs and amplitude in its faculties, cannot be ſatisfied without it, it were a much ſafer and quiet courſe to be ignorant. Study and painful enquiries after knowledg, do oftentimes exhauſt and break our

* Bp. *Wilkin's* Sermons, p. 174.

ſpirits,

ſpirits, and prejudice our health, and brings upon us thoſe Diſeaſes to which the careleſs and thinking ſeldom are obnoxious, *Eccleſ.* 1. 13, 14, 15. *I have ſeen all the works that are done under the Sun, and behold all is vanity and vexation of ſpirit; that which is crooked, cannot be made ſtraight; and that which is wanting, cannot be numbred.*

CHAP. II.

Shewing, that the fall of Adam *was the cauſe of all our miſeries; and in how excellent a condition the bleſſed Angels are; and the folly of ſuch as expect to meet with nothing in the world, but what is eaſie and pleaſant.*

Inf. 1. SEeing *the life of man is a ſtate of weeping, what ſin there muſt needs be in the fall of Adam*, that has provoked God ſo much as to ſend ſo many miſeries upon his own Creatures! Had not he fallen, we had always rejoyced, and never mourned; we had always ſung the praiſes of God with delight, and never have hang'd our harps upon the willows. We ſhould have always lived upon the food of Angels, pure and Cœleſtial joys, and not have had that bread of ſorrows which we now have to feed upon. We may juſtly cry out, O *Adam!* what was it that you did when you raſted the forbidden fruit! Why did you ruin your ſelf and us your helpleſs

leſs poſterity in one day; and by one Act you turned the pleaſant world into a place of wo, and made your ſelf and us, of free men to become priſoners of this Earth. It was a ſad day indeed that opened a Sluce to that vaſt Inundation of miſeries that have from that time overwhelmed the lower world; thence came ſtorms and tempeſts, wars and deſolations, and all the burdens under which we groan, and which we cannot eſcape. 'Tis to this Spring that we may trace all our troubles. Oh how happily, how pleaſantly might we have lived, had we not Apoſtatiz'd! And now we can only ſay, Wo unto us, for we have ſinned! and when any Plagues moleſt us, can only ſay, this is the fruit of our own choice; this is the product of our own Iniquity! Tho, thanks be to God, through the blood of Jeſus Chriſt we have a way to eſcape at length from all thoſe Plagues and Sins.

Inf. 2. *Seeing this life is full of weeping, how much more happy are the bleſſed Angels than we!* At the view of the Harmony and order of the Worlds Creation, thoſe Sons of the morning ſang together; it pleaſed them to ſee their Creator's glory ſo appear, and they ſtill continue to ſing and praiſe him; not a ſad look has from that time to this, clouded their faces; not a troubled thought has poſſeſt their minds; thoſe holy Spirits are always joyful, ſerene, and undiſturb'd; they are not linkt to ſuch bodies as we are, and conſequently not liable to ſo many thouſand miſeries. A ſoul in fleſh is forced to ſympathize with its neighbour and companion the body, and is altered or changed as to its joys and griefs,

griefs, according to the ſeveral objects that are ſuitable or diſagreeable to that; and yet our imbodied condition gives us ſome privileges, of which the Angels being Spirits, are not capable; for by this means we can glorifie God by ſuffering for him, and by our patience in our ſeveral trials, convert many to the faith of Chriſt, which their Spiritual nature gives them no opportunity to do. As long as we are united to the body, ſo long muſt we expect to be afflicted; and when this union is happily diſſolved, then does the time of our freedom and our pleaſure come. In the Reſurrection we ſhall be *as the Angels of God*, we ſhall not be buſied in thoſe perplexing and intricate affairs that now moleſt us. We ſhall be like to them in vigor, and activity, and joy. We ſhall have bodies indeed even then, but ſuch as will be ſpiritualized, ſuch as will not be capable of mourning and lamentation; nor by their heavineſs, their pains, and indiſpoſitions, be any more an hindrance to the nimbler operations of our Souls; and it ſhould comfort us to think, that one day we ſhall have ſuch excellent Companions, ſo knowing and ſo kind and loving as Angels are, and that then we ſhall rejoice as well as they, and with our common praiſe, give our Great Creator an Eternal Hymn of Thanks.

Inf. 3. *They have a wrong notion of the life of man, that expect to find nothing in it but what is pleaſant!* And who, becauſe now their mountain ſtands ſtrong, ſay with *David*, *That they ſhall never be moved!* Pſal. 30. 6, 7. How clearly ſoever their Sun now ſhines, yet ſooner or later

ſtorms

ſtorms and darkneſs will overtake them. The day is coming, that will caſt a vail upon all their ſmiling glory, and turn their laughter into mourning and lamentation. For *man is born to trouble, as the ſparks fly upwards*, Job 5. 7. This world is as an Hoſpital, or *Lazaretto*, full of various miſeries and calamities; and therefore thoſe that promiſe nothing to themſelves but diverſion and mirth, and ſoft and eaſie pleaſures, labour under manifold miſtakes, which ariſe from theſe two Cauſes.

1. *Want of Experience and Conſideration.* Hence it is that young people, and ſuch as have lived but a little while, are mightily taken with the ſweetneſs and delight of life; whereas thoſe that have tried it ſome years longer, find ſeveral croſſes and diſappointments and vexations in it; and tho the morning of their day was clear, yet they ſee many thick Clouds gather as the ſhadows of the Evening are drawing on. It is nothing elſe, but groſs ignorance that occaſions the loud and mad Triumphs of ſo great a part of the world, for if they did but a little ſurvey the condition of their ſuffering-neighbours, and the weakneſs of their own bodies, the uncertainty of their hopes; and the vanity of their deſires, they would ſit down and bewail their miſeries, and they would find their biggeſt joys to be contin'd with grief. Or,

2. *It ariſes from this, That they reſolve not to diſturb their preſent eaſe and pleaſure with any mournful meditations.* They'l ſhut their ears againſt all ſad and doleful ſtories, haſten from the ſight of all ſuch diſmal objects as would make them

grave

grave and ſolid; they will not ruffle their thoughts with anticipations of evil, and future trouble; they are now at eaſe, and they hope they ſhall be ſo very long; and this falſe expectation has no other cauſe than their unwillingneſs and averſion to think of a coming change; and becauſe they feel no pain, ſickneſs, or inconvenience, they will not ſpoil their Muſick with groans and ſighs; they will eat, drink, and be merry, and hang ſorrow and caſt care away; but as all the mirth of Sailors cannot hinder the winds and the ſtorms, ſo this inſenſibleneſs and jollity does not keep the evil day further off; but rather ſwells the Clouds, and lays in matter for a more durable and intollerable ſorrow; they may in their Jovial humours, and with their full Bowls drown their own underſtandings, but they cannot by this means overwhelm their miſeries, which after the fumes of the grateful Wine are paſt, will have a Reſurrection; they may ſay indeed, as *Iſa.* 57. 11. *Come, we will fill our ſelves, and to morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant*; but perhaps that morrow they may never ſee; or if they do, it may bring along with it ſome great or unavoidable calamity. We know *David* ſaid in his Proſperity, *I ſhall never be moved*; and yet as ſoon as God hid his face, he was troubled, *Pſal.* 30. 6, 7. ſo unreaſonable is it to conclude from our preſent delight, that we ſhall never grieve. We may as well argue, becauſe we are now in health, we ſhall never be ſick; or becauſe we are now alive, we ſhall never die. Such falſe Concluſions, and ſuch vain hopes, do but encreaſe our after-troubles,

troubles, and make them more heavy; as it is ſaid of *Babylon* the Great, *Rev.* 18. 7. *How much ſhe hath glorified her ſelf, and lived deliciouſly, ſo much torment and ſorrow give her; for ſhe ſaith in her heart, I ſit a Queen, and am no widow, and ſhall ſee no ſorrow; therefore ſhall her Plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine.* Our miſeries are ſure, but our joys uncertain; our pleaſures endure but a moment, but our ſorrows laſt a long time; our pleaſures no ſooner begin to live, but they begin to die; and when we would with art prolong their date, their continuance occaſions either torment or loathing. Grief (as one ſays *) is more familiar to man, than pleaſure; for one vain contentment, we meet with a thouſand real ſorrows; theſe come uncalled, and preſent themſelves of their own proper motion; they are linkt one to another; but pleaſures are ſought for with pain, and we are forced to pay more for them than they are worth. Sorrows are ſometimes entirely pure, and touch us to the quick, as they make us incapable of Conſolation; but pleaſures are never without ſome mixture of ſorrow; they are always dipt in bitterneſs, and we are much more ſenſible of pain than of pleaſure, for a ſlight diſeaſe troubleth all our moſt ſolid Contentments; a Fever is able to make Conquerors forget their Victories; and to blot out of their minds all the pomp of their Triumphs. Tho in ſome caſes we may make our ſorrows greater in our imagination than they are in reality; for we are more ingenious and more particular in the computation of our griefs, than of our mercies.

* *Senault uſe of the Paſſions, p. 475.*

And

And many a thorn that annoys us, is of our own planting; and for one Croſs that God ſends, our uneaſineſs and impatience makes a thouſand more. We apprehend ſome things to be evil, which are not truly ſo; and ſometimes we augment our real evils beyond their natural proportion, and ſo add new weight to that burden which made us groan before; yet for all that, and abſtracting from our Irregularities ſince the fall, man is a very dolorous and mournful Creature; and our being ſo, ſhould excite us to take heed that we do not wound our ſelves afreſh when we are already wounded; nor lay in matter of new griefs when our unavoidable ones may be great enough. There are two ways by which we aggravate our own miſeries: 1. By putting an higher value upon things than they really deſerve; by loving them more than we ought; and then the Separation that is made between them and us, gives us a more weighty ſorrow. 2. By ſeeking out of our ſelves for many things to make us happy; whereas we ſhould labour that our ſouls be duly order'd, and our deſires kept within their juſt and lawful bounds.

Inf. IV. We have cauſe to admire the wiſdom of the Divine Providence, that ſeeing the life of man is ſo very miſerable, he has ordered it alſo to be very ſhort. Tho our days are evil, yet they are but few. And that as the day is for hard labour, there is a ſucceſſion of comfortable nights wherein we may go to reſt. We find it a long tedious while to be in ſorrows for fifty or ſixty years; but how loud would

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our groans be were we condemned to this toyl, and theſe weepings for many thouſand years! The greater our miſery is (as one ſays) the leſs while it is like to laſt; the ſorrows of a man's ſpirit being like ponderous weights, which by the greatneſs of their burthen, make a ſwifter motion, and deſcend into the Grave to reſt and eaſe our wearied Limbs, and to knock our fetters off, that eat as to the very bones. Thus I have ſhewed what ſorrows are common to the ſons and daughters of men. I am in the next place to ſhew what peculiar occaſions of weeping Chriſtians have above other men.

CHAP. III.

Of the peculiar Occaſions of weeping that good Chriſtians have more than other men.

1. *THE Chriſtian weeps for his own ſins.* He is convinced of his own folly, and bewails it; he has by the inlightning of the Spirit a more tender heart than others have; a more diſtinct view of the odiouſneſs and malignity, of the poiſonous nature, and dangerous qualities of Sin; and that which was pleaſant in the commiſſion, he finds by dear experience to be bitter as gall and Wormwood afterwards. This weeping is not the effect of mere ſoftneſs, or weakneſs of temper; or from a want of courage: there is nothing more reaſonable, more juſt

juſt, or honourable, than to bewail our Offences that we are guilty of, againſt the Law of God. And to what purpoſe hath he given us Innocent Paſſions, but that they ſhould be moved when ſuitable Objects preſent themſelves? He ſays with *David*, Pſal. 51. 3. *I acknowledge my tranſgreſſion, and my ſin is ever before me*: and ſuch a ſight of an Object ſo diſagreeable, pierces and wounds his very Soul, and makes it to diſſolve in a genuine and kindly grief and trouble; ſaying, Oh! what have I done againſt my God, and my Saviour, and the Holy Spirit! Oh! how baſely have I forgot a gracious, and a loving God; a God that has remembred me all my days for good! He has loved me, and I have hated him; He has called me, and I have diſobeyed his Voice; He has provided for me, and I have rebelled: He has been a Father, but I have been undutiful, and prodigal, and diſobedient: and now his ſlighted, his forgotten Love and Kindneſs wounds me to the very Soul. Oh! what did I think of, when I did not think of him! What was it that my vain, fooliſh heart loved, when I loved not him that is altogether amiable! What was it that I cared for, or in what did I ſpend my time, that I did not care for my Soul, and the pleaſing of my God; who ſpared me, and bore with me with an admirable patience! *I have ſinned, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou preſerver of men!* Job 7. 20. I will put my mouth in the duſt, I will loath and abhor my ſelf for mine Iniquities, if ſo be there may be hope. I have wandred, but my wandrings have coſt me dear; I have been in a

ſtrange Land, and with tears will I return home; ſaying, *Bleſs me, even me alſo, O my Father!* And then the Love of Jeſus conſtrains the poor Chriſtian to be ſorrowful; ſaying, Did he leave his Heaven for me, and for me that many times would not leave a ſin for him; for me, that was a loſt Sheep, a dying Malefactor, an Enemy by my Evil Works! Did he come to reſcue me, when I was in the very jaws of the Roaring Lyon, and at the door of Hell; and ſhall I not be grieved to think, that I have requited him ſo ill for all his Love! they were my ſins that made him aſtoniſht, and troubled, and exceeding ſorrowful even unto death; and yet alas, I have done what I could to increaſe his Agonies by my new ſins: It was my ſin that filled the bitter Cup, that betrayed, that whipt, that expoſed to ſo injurious uſage the Son of God: my ſin that wounded his Breaſt, and raked in his Sides, and nailed him to the Tree, and made him dye; and can I look upon what I have done, and not be troubled? Can my eyes behold him hanging on the Croſs, and not affect my heart? Never was there any Sorrow like to his Sorrow, never was there any Love like to his Love: Never was there Diſobedience more inexcuſable, never was Sin more ſinful, than mine has been! I have often made light of that that preſt him down to the Grave. I have rejoyced at that which made him mourn and weep, but I will do ſo again no more for ever. And then it troubles the good Chriſtian to think how often he has refuſed the motions of the bleſſed Spirit, and how when the Spirit has

has moved upon his heart with a design to do him good, he hath sent him grieved and vexed away. All this is occasion of grief, tho it do not always expres it self in tears; for there is a rational sorrow as well as a sensitive one; and tho this may be more passionate, yet the other is more lasting and durable. Those that are converted in their younger days, the warmth and heat of their glowing and beginning zeal, does more easily dissolve and melt them into tears, and then the rivers flow more than they do afterwards; but yet when the flood ceases, the fruitfulness appears, and when their tears are dried up, yet their hatred of sin remains; for these outward expressions of sorrow are very much influenced by the temper and constitution of the body, 2 *Cor.* 7. 10, 11. As in the first, so 'tis in the second birth, as soon as they are born, they cry. No sooner are they brought from darkness into marvellous light, but they wonder at their folly, and at the grace of God that saved them from it, and that wonder does produce love and grief. First their hearts are softned with his love, and then they mourn for their Provocations; tho this wherewith good Christians bewail their sins, is not a lazy grief, but attended with serious endeavours of new obedience, as the Husbandman after the profitable showers of rain sets himself with a renewed industry to cultivate the Ground: and it is but reasonable that our eyes, that are too often the instruments of sin to us, should by tears help us to bewail that

ſin, *Iſa.*38.15. I ſhall go ſoftly all my years in the bitterneſs of my Soul.

2 *Thoſe that are good Chriſtians, weep alſo for the ſins of others.* The love they have to the name of God, cauſes them to grieve for the reflections and diſhonours that are thrown upon it by wicked men. They cannot without ſorrow, behold or hear of the ſins of men in general; the ſins of Kingdoms, and Provinces, and Towns; the ſins of Families; the ſins of their Fellow-citizens, their Brethren, and their Neighbours: the tears that they ſhed, are tears of compaſſion for the very ſad and miſerable condition of the World. Whilſt others make a mock at ſin, and through the blindneſs of their folly, know not what they do, good men lament their unconcernedneſs and inſenſibility, whilſt they ſee them ſporting on the hole of Aſpes, and touching Firebrands, and Death. They cannot ſee men treat their heavenly Father with inſolence and ſcorn, but their hearts, in a juſt zeal for his glory, riſe againſt them, not with indecent paſſions for their ruine, but in an hearty longing for their reformation; *Pſal.*119. 138. *Rivers of water run down mine eyes, becauſe they keep not thy Law.* Thus ſaith the Prophet to his hearers, *Jer.*13.17. *My ſoul ſhall weep in ſecret places for your pride; mine eyes ſhall weep ſore, and run down with tears.* Our love to our Neighbour, and our zeal for God's glory, does oblige us to this; it muſt grieve us to think what men are doing when they ſin, how great a God they provoke to puniſh them, how great a miſery they are bringing on their own ſouls. It muſt

muſt grieve us to think how unſafe a way they go, and what a diſmal end will be to that way, *Phil.* 3. 19. *Jer.* 9. 1. *The Prophet wiſhes, Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the ſlain of the daughter of my people.* And yet (as one obſerves) when he pronounced theſe ſad words, the miſery of the *Jews* was not arrived. *Jeruſalem* did as yet ſubſiſt in its Magnificence and Splendor, its Temple had not loſt that admirable Beauty which made it the wonder of the world; its Palaces had loſt nothing of their Pomp, its Walls and Fortreſſes were entire, and the Daughter of *Sion* was Princeſs among the Provinces; but he ſpoke thus, foreſeeing that their abounding ſins, and their hardneſs and obſtinacy would certainly bring upon them the Judgments of God. We muſt conſider what we were our ſelves when in the houſe of bondage, and ſerving divers luſts, how enſlaved and how miſerable, that ſo the remembrance we have of our former danger may quicken us to do others all the good we can, that they may not fall into hell whileſt we are looking on, and do not all that is in our power to hinder their going thither. To this compaſſionate ſorrow we may be excited by the kind example of our Lord, *Luke* 19. 41. he wept for thoſe that rejoyced, he pityed them that had no pity for their own ſouls; becauſe their hearts were hardned, his was very ſoft and tender. It is matter of mourning and lamentation, to conſider how few there are that profeſs Religion in its ſtrictneſs; and among thoſe few, how many that are ſcandalous or

Duboſc. Sermons, *pag.* 1.

backſliders, or hypocrites. It has been often obſerved, that among the bitter Ingredients of our Lords paſſion, this was none of the leaſt, to foreſee that there would be ſo many, who by their final impenitence and perſevering in wickedneſs, would receive no benefit by it *. And if we may judg by proportion, the Angels in Heaven, who rejoice at the converſion of one ſinner, do alſo mourn and lament for the Irreclaimable wickedneſs of ſo many Millions in the world: To a zealous Magiſtrate, it is an occaſion of ſorrow to ſee in his Dominions the great King and Ruler of the world ſo little valued; and his grief will ſtir him up to uſe all the wholſome methods he can, by good Laws, and a neceſſary ſeverity, to keep the Divine Laws and Authority from being ſcorned and trampled on by profane and blaſphemous ſinners: To a good Parent, it is an occaſion of grief to ſee the undutifulneſs and miſcarriages of his children; and very cutting to think that he has brought forth ſuch as ſhall be his torment, and factors for the Devil. To a Miniſter, it is an occaſion of grief, when he meets with a careleſs Auditory, or with an unfruitful people, that he is like to ſee them periſh under the means of ſafety, and that he is like to be their accuſer in the great day, and that they are like to be ſeparated for ever when the judgment comes; it is with an heavy heart, and many a tear that he thinks of their forlorn ſtate, *Rom.* 9. 1, 2. *Ye know after what manner I have been with you at all ſeaſons, ſerving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations*, Act. 20. 19. *For the ſpace of three years*

* *Norris's* Diſcourſe on the Beatitudes *pag.* 44.

years I ceaſed not to warn every one night and day with tears, ver. 31.

3. *They weep for the manifold tribulations and perſecutions they meet withal.* When God is pleaſed for their chaſtiſement to let looſe the paſſions and the fury of wicked men, whoſe tender mercies are cruelty. *Cant.* 2. 2. *As the Lilly among the thorns, ſo is my love among the daughters.* She is beautiful and glorious, but ſurrounded with difficulties and tribulations. *Pſal.* 84. 6. *Paſſing through the valley of Baca, they make it a well, the rain alſo filleth the pools.* They are ſatisfied, indeed, to endure in the hope of Heaven; but yet their ſorrows and torments make them go weeping thither. They have ſenſe as well as Religion; and their ſenſible nature, whether they will or no, will be affected, they cannot be ſick but they muſt groan and ſigh as well as others; they cannot feel tortures, racks, tedious Impriſonments, and flames, without ſhrinking a little at them; even the Apoſtles, thoſe great and couragious believers, were *troubled*, and *perplexed*, tho *they were not overthrown*, 2 *Cor.* 4. 8. In times of Perſecution there is a general licenſe of doing miſchief, a bold oppreſſing of the poor, a ſcornful deſpiſing of the afflicted and the deſolate, as they complain, *Pſal.* 123. 4. *Our ſoul is exceedingly filled with the ſcorning of thoſe that are at eaſe, and with the contempt of the proud*; and the ſcorn of evil men is ſo baſe a thing, that the moſt patient cannot but be ſomewhat concerned at it, *Pſal.* 42. 11. *My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually ſay unto me, Where is thy God? when I remem-*

ber theſe things, I pour out my ſoul in me. 'Tis true, the ſervants of Chriſt eſteem it abundant matter of joy when they fall into divers tribulations; their minds are quiet, and very well ſatisfied; they love their Maſter, and they will never leave him; they will follow him to the Croſs, and die with him there; but inaſmuch as they are compoſed of fleſh and blood, and have a nature that is tender and ſoft, and averſe to ſuffering, as well as that of others, and that has ſeveral things that engage it to the world, ſeveral Relations and Friends to part withal, they cannot with reſpect to theſe, leave this Earth without ſome grief and ſorrow; as the Hearers of *Paul* wept that they ſhould ſee his face no more; and it was even like to break his heart that he was to leave friends ſo affectionate, ſo loving, and ſo kind. And we muſt think they did not part at laſt without flowing eyes on either ſide, *Act.* 21. 15.

4. *Chriſtians, however eaſie in their own Circumſtances, have ſtill occaſion of ſorrow from that ſympathy that they have with their brethren that are in diſtreſs.* The ſpirit of our compaſſionate Lord dwells in their hearts; and as he is afflicted with all the afflictions of his people, ſo are they; they are all the members of the ſame body, and one part of the body cannot rejoice whileſt another part thereof is in pain. Thus they weep with them that weep, *Rom.* 12. 15. To hear of the deſolations of others, is extremely grievous to them; nor can they laugh and be merry whileſt others ſigh and groan, ſee *Jer.* 4. 31. *Ch.* 8, 21, 22. *Jer.* 14. 17, to the 20. They cannot

not chear themſelves with Muſick, when the Harps of others are hanging on the Willows, *Lam.* 1. 12, 16. *Ch.* 2. 11, 12. And this Book of the *Lamentations* is ſo very lamentable, that it very well deſerves to be read and conſidered by us; that ſo the miſeries of our Neighbours may affect us as they ought to do, *Job* 30. 35. *Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? was not my ſoul grieved for the poor?* It muſt be a temper very Helliſh, that has no relentings for the ſufferings of others, even ſuch a *Diabolical temper* as reigneth in *France* at this day; where by the encouragement of a *Cruel King*, and *as Cruel a Clergy*, the poor Proteſtants have undergone barbarous and more than Heathen ſeverities; if they had any thing humane left, they could not have uſed thoſe poor Harmleſs and Innocent people as they have done. But they have long ſince degenerated into Wolves, and to this day retain their brutal and ſavage nature, tearing to pieces the ſheep of Chriſt without any provocation; and tho ſome have had ſuch a brazen impudence as to ſay they have all along uſed with them nothing but ſweet and gentle methods, yet there are Witneſſes enough, and too many, (if it pleaſed God) in all parts of *Europe*, that tell us Melancholy ſtories of their Helliſh Cruelties; had there been the loweſt degrees of Chriſtianity left in that Execrable Country, they could not, they durſt not have proceeded to ſuch barbarities as they have done, where neither the Gray hairs of the moſt aged and venerable, neither the Tears of Widows, nor the Sighs of Priſoners could ever yet prevail

vail for the leaſt mitigation. They have exceeded the worſt of former Ages in the cruelty of their torments; any other eyes would weep but theirs, to ſee what they inflict on their fellow-creatures; any other hearts would ſoften at the groans and the crys of ſo many miſerable people; but nothing can make an Impreſſion upon them, their Dungeons, Gallies, and Racks, and Gibbets, are the only things they can think of wherewith to vex ſuch as are better than themſelves, ſuch as have been guilty of no crime, unleſs it were *an exceſs of Loyalty to a King, who is an enemy to mankind*, as well as *their* enemy. By whoſe allowance the vileſt of men are permitted to do all thoſe villanous and wicked things which raiſe a juſt horror in all that have any zeal to the glory of God. To ſee ſuch feeding their cruel eyes with woful ſpectacles of the diſtreſſed and ſorrowful, whom they have made to be ſuch. The moſt pathetick melting expreſſions have not been able to draw the leaſt pity from the breaſts of theſe inhumane Monſters. Will men never be aſhamed of their Antichriſtian barbarity? will they never know that it is the Beaſt in the *Revelations*, who makes himſelf drunk with the blood of Saints, devours their fleſh, makes war upon them, and overcomes them; and is therefore called *Beaſt*, *Lion*, *Bear*, *Leopard*; for he muſt have renounced Reaſon and Humanity, and be tranformed into a Savage Beaſt, that behaves himſelf towards Chriſtians as the Church of *Rome* behaves it ſelf towards us. Thoſe *French Perſecutors* are ſo bad, that they cannot be reproached; we cannot it

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we would, beſpatter or throw dirt upon them, they are already ſo defiled; 'tis impoſſible to create in the minds of others, any Idea of them that ſhall be baſe enough; and it is our ſhame, the ſtain of our Country, and a diſhonour to the Name of an *Engliſh man*, that in our Country, in ours that is naturally inclined to pity and compaſſion to the miſerable, there ſhould be found any that wiſh well to a Tyrant ſo tyrannical, and to a people ſo nouriſhed, and ſo fed with blood, as his Soldiers and Creatures are; 'tis our judgment that we are ſo blinded, and ſo much ſtupified, and thrown into ſo deep a ſleep that we do not perceive our own blindneſs. But I ſhould be very ſorry if I ſpoke to any ſuch; I hope, and I believe that there are none here ſo much under the Curſe of God; a Curſe the more terrible, as it is contrary to all that love of God, our Neighbour, and our Country, that we ought to have; and if we are any way curſt, 'tis becauſe we have had no more compaſſion for our Brethren that have ſuffered ſuch grievous things; that we have wept no more at the ſight of their ſorrows, but that we have ſtill too many among us of the Complexion of thoſe in *Amos 6. 6.* Men are generally unaffected with the miſeries of others; they are like the Prieſt and the Levite that left the poor wounded perſon without any help; they fix not their eyes or their minds on ſad objects, for they find them to be very diſagreeable.

V. *Another occaſion of weeping to good Chriſtians, it both from the Duties of Religion, and the more than ordinary Providences and Diſpenſations of God, that*

that call them to it. There are ſeveral things, which though in the conſequence they are very pleaſant, yet are in themſelves very ſorrowful; as that which I have already mentioned, the bitterneſs of repentance; the trouble for the afflictions of others; and alſo the Duties of *ſelf-denyal and mortification*; of *crucifying the fleſh with the affections and luſts thereof*; of *dying daily*, *and of keeping our hearts weaned from an inordinate affection* to the Enjoyments and Comforts of the World. All good Chriſtians are to be in heavineſs for a ſeaſon, and to ſow in tears: And to theſe may be added the Calls we have to more *publick and ſolemn Humiliations*, by the neceſſity of our own Affairs, the Judgments of God, and the Pride, and Rage, and Succeſs of his and our Enemies; and this is the Duty to which we are now called; and let us take care that our days of Faſting and Prayers, may be mingled with the Tears of a true Repentance and Contrition, that ſo God who has been for us hitherto, may not be againſt us; and that we may not ſmart under Spiritual Judgments, which of all others are moſt formidable and ſevere, according to that in *Iſa.* 22. 12, 13. Thus good Chriſtians have many juſt ſubjects of weeping; they weep to ſee themſelves as in Exile, and at a diſtance from their beloved Countrey; They weep to find themſelves compaſſed about with many infirmities, and unbecoming paſſions, that cauſe them to be engaged in continual War; They weep that they are expoſed to ſo many furious aſſaults of the Devil, and that they have ſo little ſtrength wherewith to reſiſt him; They

weep

weep when they conſider that their Good and Gracious God, is ſo much diſhonoured and forgot in his own World.

Inf. 1. *What need all good Chriſtians have of Faith and Patience*; of Faith, to conclude that God does all very well in Holineſs and Wiſdom, tho he ſuffer the World and the Church to groan under ſo many miſeries, and tribulations; and of patience, to ſubmit to what he appoints for our Lot, and not in the leaſt to repine or murmur at it. Without Faith we ſhall be apt to be ſtumbled at theſe ſeeming diſorders, and the inequal diſtributions of his Providence; and without Patience, we ſhall be apt to ſtruggle under the neceſſary Croſs, to be tired, and to ſay, *It is in vain to wait upon the Lord.*

Inf. 2. *Good Chriſtians have great Reaſon quietly to leave the World, and to dye when God ſhall be pleaſed to call them*: It is a World of miſery, of ſorrows and vexation. We ſhould not be fond of our Chains, nor delight in Tears, nor embrace our Griefs; but remember we ſhall leave all theſe troubleſome things behind us, when we come to lye down in the quiet Grave: For *there the wicked ceaſe from troubling, and there the weary be at reſt*, Job 3. 17. We do not ſure eſteem this ſtrange Land to be better than our Father's Houſe; we do not think that the Vale of Tears is better than the Joys of Heaven; to that Heaven then, let us often lift up our weeping eyes; with the hope of that let us comfort our ſad and mournful hearts; thither let us haſten,

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there let us long to be; into that Haven let us ſteer our diſtreſſed and weary Souls; Let us breathe after that Paradiſe that ſhall not be moleſted with the Poyſonous venom of the Serpent, and where no Thorns or Bryars grow: Let us not be fond of a perpetual Storm, nor be ſo fooliſh, as to think our Sighs better than Praiſes and Hallelujahs. Let us haſten in our deſires from this diſeaſed World, which by its low ſcituation is apt to ſuffer an inundation of innumerable miſeries; and prepare for that World, where there is an Eternal Health and Joy.

CHAP. IV.

Shewing what dreadful apprehenſions a ſoul has, that is under deſertion; and in ſeveral reſpects how very ſad an doleful its condition is, from the Author's own Experience.

THE next thing I deſign to inſiſt upon is, To ſhew that the time of God's forſaking of a ſoul, is a very dark and mournful time; 'tis not only night, but a weeping, ſtormy night; and it may not be unuſeful to you, who have, it may be, hitherto lived in the beams and chearful light of day, to know *what paſſes in this ſorrowful and doleful night:* And in this matter, I will not borrow Information from others,

others, but give you my own Experience.

1. *In this night the deſerted ſoul is overwhelmed with continual thoughts of the Holineſs, and Majeſty, and Glory of the Lord*; nor does it think of him with any manner of delight, according to that of *Aſaph*, Pſal. 77. 3. *I remembred God, and was troubled; I complained, and my ſpirit was overwhelmed.* And in how deplorable a Caſe is ſuch a Soul, that cannot think of its God and its Creator, but with grief and ſorrow! That fixes upon nothing in him, but his terrible and ſevere Attributes! In other Caſes, when a Man is diſtreſſed on Earth, and beholds vexation and diſquiet there, he can lift up his eyes towards Heaven, and ſee joy and comfort for him there; but in this woful Caſe, there is neither the light of the Sun, the Moon, or the Stars, for many days; the face of God is hid and covered with a dreadful Cloud, *Job* 31. 23. *Deſtruction from God was a terror to me; and becauſe of his highneſs, I could not endure.*

Secondly, *The deſerted ſoul in this mournful night does look upon God as its enemy*; and as intending its hurt and ruin by the ſharpneſs of his diſpenſations; and this makes it to be incapable of receiving any conſolation from the Creatures; for will it ſay to them, Alas, if God be mine enemy, as I apprehend him to be, which of you can be my friend? I have a dreadful ſound of his diſpleaſure in my ears, and which of you can bring me any glad tidings? If his power, his Irreſiſtible power be againſt me, who can keep off the killing-blow! *Job* 19. 6. *Know*

now

now that God hath overthrown me, and hath compaſſed me with his net; he hath fenced up my way that I cannot paſs, and he hath ſet darkneſs in my paths. And ſo *v.* 9, 10, 11. and *Pſal.* 88. 7. *Thy wrath lyeth hard upon me, and thou haſt afflicted me with all thy waves.* If in ſuch deſertion, God were apprehended to be upon a deſign of the future happineſs and welfare of the ſoul, it would bear up with courage, or with hope; but having no ſuch belief, it muſt needs ſink and languiſh. The ſtroke that wounds us in ſuch a caſe, is the more painful, as edged with a ſenſe of wrath. *Pſal.* 102. 9, 10. *I have eaten aſhes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, becauſe of thine indignation and thy wrath, for thou haſt lifted me up, and caſt me down.* Thus does the weeping perſon vent his ſorrows. God never gives to his people ſuch a bitter Cup, but he mingles love and mercy with it; but alas, I taſte nothing but gall and wormwood, nothing but miſery and vexation: He is with his people, but he has forſaken me, he has caſt me into a fiery furnace, where I am daily burnt and ſcorcht, and he is not with me there: He is unto me as a Roaring Lion, and who can turn away his powerful wrath! *Ruth* 1. 20. *The Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.* I have often heard, that it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the Living God, and I now find it to be ſo; all the wrath of men is nothing to his; one frown of his is more intolerable than all their rage and perſecution. *Job* 16. 12, 13, 14. *I was at eaſe, but he hath broken me aſunder, he hath alſo taken me by my neck, and ſhaken me to pieces, and ſet me*

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up for his mark, his Archers compaſs me round about; he cleaveth my reins aſunder, and doth not ſpare; he poureth out my gall upon the ground, Job 10. 16, 17. Oh what anguiſh, what deſolation is cauſed in the ſoul by ſuch thoughts as theſe! I dare not, ſays the mourning perſon, look up to Heaven, for there I ſee how great a God I have againſt me; I dare not look into his word, for there I ſee all his threats as ſo many barbed arrows to ſtrike me to the heart: I dare not look into the Grave, becauſe thence I am like to have a doleful Reſurrection: And what can a poor Creature do, that apprehends the Almighty to be his enemy? It is a common thing to ſay, why do you ſo lament and mourn? you have many mercies left, many friends that pray for you, and that pity you; Alas! what help is there in all this, if God himſelf be gone! nothing is then lookt upon as a mercy. And as for the prayers of others, will the diſtreſſed perſon ſay, they can do me no good, unleſs I have faith, and I find I have none at all; for that would purifie and cleanſe my heart, and I do nothing elſe but ſin; and God, as he is holy, muſt ſet himſelf againſt me his Enemy.

3ly, *In this doleful night, the ſoul hath no evidence at all of its former grace*; ſo that in this night, the Sun is not only ſet, but there is not one Star appears; ſuch an one looks upon himſelf as altogether void of the Grace of God; he looks upon all his former duties to have been inſincere or hypocritical; he feels his heart hardned at preſent, and concludes that it was never tender; finds himſelf at preſent liſtleſs and in-

diſpoſed, and concludes that he never had any true life and motion, and expreſſes his ſorrows after this, or the like manner: I thought I had belong'd to God, but now I find I am none of his: I thought I had been upright, but now I ſee I was miſtaken; the ſtorm is come, and that houſe that I built upon the ſand, is now waſht away; thoſe that are Chriſt's, he will enable to perſevere to the end; but I am fallen from grace; I am an Apoſtate; if I had any ſhare in the Interceſſion of the Great Redeemer, he would not leave me thus ſad and deſolate. I thought that I had been planted in his Vineyard, and brought forth fruit, but now I am cut down as a barren tree: Oh, how greatly have I been deceived, that imagined my ſelf to be an Heir of Heaven, and am now ſeiz'd with the pangs of Hell! I now ſee that I was never right, never born again, never renewed by the Spirit, never changed from death to life. And Oh what will become of me, that flattered my own ſoul to ruin! that thought my ſelf ſafe when I was not; and well when I was diſeaſed! To come to miſery after I thought ſo long of happineſs is a double miſery: I am like, after all my prayers, my endeavours, and my hopes, to be a Reprobate, and a caſt-away. And ſuch a ſoul concludes it ſelf to be in a condition much more dangerous than they are, that never named the name of Chriſt, nor ever pretended to Religion, becauſe it reckons their miſery will be much more tollerable than its own; it judges it ſelf to be an Hypocrite, and then all the threats that are made againſt ſuch, do every moment

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overwhelm it with inexpreſſible confuſion. Thus the Graces of the Spirit, and the former fruits of holineſs, are not diſcerned in this ſad and mournful night.

Fourthly, *During this ſadneſs, the ſoul cannot think of Chriſt himſelf with any comfort.* For thus it argues; He will be a Saviour to none but thoſe that believe; I have no faith, and therefore he will be no Saviour to me; he that is to his Servants as the Lamb of God, will be to me as the Lion of the Tribe of *Judah*; he that deals gently with them, will tear me to pieces. I have heard of his ſufferings and his death; but if his blood has not cleanſed and purified me, I am like to periſh for all that. I heard his voice, and I diſobeyed it; I heard his Goſpel, and did not improve it, and now even the glad tidings of Salvation are not ſo to me: I did not know in the long day that I had, the things that belong'd unto my peace, and now they are hid from mine eyes. Now I have to deal with the great and the dreadful God himſelf, and I have none to plead my cauſe. Oh how can I reſiſt his power, or bear his wrath! Chriſt indeed called me, but I did not open to him, and now he calls no more; he ſeems to be angry and enraged againſt me for my diſobedience; and tho I have cried ſometimes, *Have mercy on me, thou Son of David!* he paſſes away, and does not regard my cryes. And, O what ſhall I do when he comes in the Clouds of Heaven, when I am to ſtand at his Bar, and to be puniſhed as an unbeliever! To others, that will be a day of Refreſhment; but what will it be to me! the

thoughts of it are now amazing! And thus by a ſenſe of unbelief the deſerted ſoul is plunged in the waves, and ſees no way of eſcape; and by this Unbelief it thinks of God as abſolutely conſidered, and the thoughts of him are as terrible as if there were no Mediator; and it is continually ſaying, I have all my ſins to anſwer for, and have none to undertake for me; I am condemned, and have none to procure a pardon and ſalvation for me.

Fifthly, *In this Night the ſoul is full of terror*; and how can it be otherwiſe, when every thought of God, and of Chriſt, overwhelms it! *Job 6. 4. For the arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poyſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit; the terrors of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt me.* Such arrows that are ſhot by an Almighty arm, with a great power and force, they muſt needs, being ſo directed, pierce very deep; deep and painful muſt the wounds be that a God makes; and then they are poyſoned arrows too, that being dipt in his wrath, inflame the wounds they make, and put the diſtreſſed perſon into pain and anguiſh inexpreſſible. Night is a time of terror, eſpecially in commotions, uproars, and the like miſchiefs, *Pſal. 91. 5.* and in this night it is much more ſo, when a man's own Conſcience diſcharges a thouſand accuſations againſt him for his guilt; for then every ſin gives a blow; and altogether being ſet in array, make a formidable force; and when God ſets on peculiar impreſſions of his wrath, and it falls upon the naked ſoul with its ſcorching burning drops, there is not then one quiet thought,

thought, nor one eaſie moment, all is amazement, confuſion and wo. *Lam.* 3. 3. *Surely againſt me is he turned, he turneth his hand againſt me all the day.* A perſon that is thus diſtreſs'd, ſits and muſes on his miſery, and would gladly find ſomething that might be comfortable, but he cannot; what he firſt thinks of, is tormenting; he changes that uneaſie thought for another, and that is as tormenting as the firſt; there is a circulation of flaming diſquiet thoughts, and ſuch a perſon dwells as in a fiery Furnace, or as in a thicket of briers, which way ſoever he turns himſelf, he is pained and wounded; all the terrible places of Scripture that are made againſt the wicked, do continually preſent themſelves to his conſideration, and he thinks that he ſhall moſt certainly have their portion; every thing in nature that is frightful, frights him, as ſtill believing God to be againſt him; from all the terrible things imaginable he fetches ſomething that does ſtill more afflict him; and thus he will be imagining: Suppoſe I were to be ſawn aſunder, to be burnt, to be flea'd alive, or to be torn to pieces; Oh what a ſad thing would that be! and yet I am in a caſe worſe than all this, for I am now continually racked with guilt, and am like to be in Hell for ever. The terrors of the Lord we may feel indeed, but we cannot expreſs them, they are ſo very terrible; they wound our moſt ſenſible and tender part; they cauſe our very ſouls to pine and languiſh away; they fix our minds to the contemplation of every thing that is ſad and doleful; they fill us with confuſion; and

Heman ſays, *Pſ.*88.15. they are terrors that compaſs us round about, they ſeize upon every faculty, and diſtreſs us in every part; to have God againſt us, his holineſs to dazle us, his Power to overthrow us, his Law to condemn us, our Conſciences to accuſe us, is the ſum of terrors!

Sixthly, *Fear is another occaſion of ſorrow*, and the night is uſually a time of horror; we are apt then to be impoſed upon with falſe, as well as with real dangers. We can think of nothing but our miſery; and the continual unavoidable thinking of it, makes us more miſerable, *Job* 13.21. theſe fears are as ſo many Fetters from which we cannot fly; and when we think to ſhake them off, we put our ſelves to more pain. *If I ſay I will forget my complaints, I will leave off my heavineſs, and comfort my ſelf, I am afraid of all my ſorrows; I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent*, *Job* 9.27, 28. we are frighted with the Greatneſs and Majeſty of God, with the Glory of his Being, and the Thunder of his Power: We are frighted with the view of our innumerable ſins, and with the dangers that attend them; the thoughts of Heaven fright us, becauſe we think we have loſt that bleſſed place; and the thoughts of Hell are no leſs frightful, becauſe we think we ſhall ſoon be there; the thoughts of life are frightful, becauſe 'tis with anguiſh and horror that we live; nor can we bear the thoughts of death, becauſe we dare not die.

Seventhly, *'Tis a night of weeping to deſerted ſouls, becauſe they find no heart to pray, and no life in prayer*; they fall upon their knees, and cover

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the Altar of the Lord with tears, but he ſeems not to regard them; they beg, and he gives them no relief; they cry and he does not anſwer; and this fills them with ſhame and grief, *Lam.* 3. 7, 8. the thoughts of ſuch poor people are in a continual hurry, and ſo are very full of wandrings in the performance of their duty: Grief, by ſaddening the ſpirits, deſtroys the freedom of our ſpeech; for joy is the mother of Eloquence and fluency; and when they would move up towards Heaven, this ſorrow damps their vigor, and makes them that they cannot fly; and finding they are ſtill perplex'd even after prayer, and ſtill as uncomfortable as before, they are apt to throw it off, and ſay, It is vain to pray; as *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 28. 15. *God is departed from me, and anſwers me no more.* And ſorrow is naturally a very dull and ſluggiſh thing; a man has no heart to go about any work when he is very ſad; and this faintneſs occaſions a new trouble; we are vext when we do not pray; and when we would, we cannot. Sorrows damp our faith, our love, and our hope, and ſo ſpoil our duties; for without theſe, they are without life, and without acceptance; and ſometimes our grief is ſo violent, that it finds no vent, it ſtrangles us, and we are overcome. *I am ſo troubled, that I cannot ſpeak*, Pſal. 77. 4. It is with us in our deſertions as with a man that gets a ſlight hurt, at firſt he walks up and down, but not looking betimes to prevent a growing miſchief, the neglected wound begins to feſter, or to gangrene, and brings him to greater pain and loſs; ſo it is with us many times in our

Spiritual ſadneſs; when we are firſt troubled, we pray and pour out our ſouls before the Lord; but afterwards the waters of our grief drown our crys, and we are ſo overwhelmed, that if we might have all the world we cannot pray, or at leaſt we can find no enlargement, no life, no pleaſure in our prayers; and God himſelf ſeems to take no delight in them, and that makes us more ſad. *Pſal.* 22. 1.

Eighthly, *Such have no patience wherewith to bear their evils*; Oh who is he that can bear the wrath of God! one thought of him as a reconciled Father, would ſweeten the moſt heavy Croſs; but one view of him as an enemy, cauſes all our ſtrength to depart, and melts our very ſouls. In bodily evils the mind lends its aſſiſtance, and furniſhes the natural ſpirits with courage; but when its ſelf is weakned and troubled, what is it able to do? the wounded ſoul is moſt commonly fretful and impatient; the ſight of Heaven inſpires our breaſts with vital heat, and makes us quiet and ſubmiſſive under every diſpenſation; but the daily ſight and fear of Hell, fills us with tumult and diſorder; the language of deſerted people for the moſt part is in groans, and in their prayers they *chatter as a Crane, or a Swallow, or mourn as a Dove*, Iſa. 38. 14. Job 13. 20, 21.

Ninthly, *They uſually ſee no proſpect of relief or deliverance, and that encreaſes the ſorrows of their doleful Night*; they are covered in the deep pit, and ſee no way *to fly from it*, Job 9. 27, 28. they are wounded, and carry their wounds with them where they go; they are continually fixing their

their mournful eyes upon deſtruction and the Grave, *Job* 7. 7, 8. they have indeed, now and then, ſome intermiſſions, but they are like the ſmall breathings and refreſhments of a perſon that is newly taken off the Rack, to be carried to the Rack again. The Tears of theſe poor deſerted people, are not like the Tears of *Mary* in the Garden; for as ſoon as ſhe began to weep, ſhe beheld the Lord; He quickly came to her help, and changed her Sorrows into Conſolations; and his ſweet Voice did in a moment run through all the powers of her ſoul, and made her heart to leap with Joy, and ſcattered light upon it: But in this caſe he ſuffers his Servants to be toſt for a long and doleful night, ere he be pleaſed to ſpeak, and to calm the ſtorms; ſo that they are as perſons ſtraitly beſieged, and have no relief at hand; as perſons athirſt, and have no Water; hungry, and have no Bread. Pſal. 113. 4. *I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me, refuge failed me.*

Tenthly, *This Night of weeping is the more ſorrowful, becauſe it is the time of Satan's Cruelty.* When our Spirits are broken with long and painful afflictions, then this Cowardly Spirit ſets upon us; he knows that he can eaſily perplex us, when we are already thrown upon the Ground. When the Sun ſets, then the Beaſts of the Field creep abroad; When God is departed, then the Devil comes. He comes and torments us with innumerable fears; comes and Triumphs over us, inſults, and ſays, Where is now your God? What think you now of Sin?

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What is now become of all your Hearing, your Reading, and your many Prayers? You thought to have eſcaped my Power, and now I have you within my reach; now remember that at ſuch or ſuch a time you ſinned, and therefore God has forſaken you; you weep, and your Tears are juſt; for you are miſerable, and are like to be with me for ever. He makes uſe of our ſore Afflictions, to repreſent God to us as Tyrannical, and as one that will certainly deſtroy us; and it is our grief, and our miſery, that we have ſo little in our deſertions to anſwer to him. When we really believe that God is departed from us, What can we ſay? How does this Roaring Lion moſt cruelly moleſt us, when our Glory and our Strength is gone! though at other ſeaſons we can oppoſe his malice, and confidently ſay, *The Lord, that hath choſen Jeruſalem, rebuke thee.* He is, indeed, a knowing and a ſubtile Spirit; he knows our weakneſs, ſees our trouble, and urges even the very Scriptures and Providences of God upon us to our diſadvantage, and that with a marvellous importunity and diligence: He ſhoots at us with fiery Darts, that are extreamly painful, and comes to ſhoot them when we are under a ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure; which is like thruſting of a Red Iron into a Wound that is already very ſore. It pleaſes the Devil to hear us groan, and to ſee us ſad; and when we are already preſſed down with our Evils, he will be ſure to throw upon us more weight; our Groans are his Muſick; and when we wallow in Aſhes, drown our ſelves in Tears, and ſpread

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our Hands for help, and roar till our Throat is dry, he gluts his cruel heart with looking on our woes; it is the pleaſanteſt ſight to him, to ſee God hiding himſelf from his Child, and that Child broken with fears, torn in pieces with Griefs, made a Brother to Dragons, a Companion to Owls, under reſtleſs Anxieties, perpetual Lamentations, feeble, and ſore broken, their Tongue cleaving to their Jaws, their Bowels boyling, their Bones burnt with heat, and their fleſh conſumed *; He ſets upon us after we have been long troubled, and weary with our March in the doleful Night: And which is the ſorrow of our ſorrows, God may for a long while leave us in his hands; and by his uſage of *Job*, we know what his temper is. *Luke* 22. 31. 'Tis the hour and the power of darkneſs.

* Dr. *Gilpin* on Satans Temptations, Part 2. p. 281.

Eleventhly, *Sometimes this Sorrow is mixed with deep Deſpair*: It is a Tempeſtuous and Stormy Night. And as *Paul* ſaid in another caſe, *All hope of their being ſaved is taken away.* I ſhall ſurely periſh, ſaith the mourning ſoul; I am damned, I am loſt for ever; I am already as in Hell, under unexpreſſible, inſupportable pains; and amazing fears; the Lord will be favourable no more, he hath ſhut up his Bowels, and his Tender Mercies; he is gone, he is gone from me, and he is for ever gone. No more ſhall I call him Father; no more ſhall I behold his ſhining face; no more ſhall I hear his kind and loving Voice, he is my Judge and my Enemy, and I am afraid he will be ſo for ever. He hath caſt me off, he hath forſaken me,

me; he hath condemned me, and I am loſt for ever: I am now like to have my poor Soul gathered with Sinners and with Bloody Men; I am now never like to ſee that Heaven where I once hoped to go; I ſee nothing but ruin, nothing but deſolation, nothing but blackneſs of darkneſs; and theſe unbelieving, deſpairing Concluſions, produce hard and ſtrange thoughts of God, and an enmity to him in our minds.

Twelfthly, *Looking upon their preſent troubles as an Introduction to more, and that theſe are but the beginning of ſorrows.* Iſa. 38. 13. *I reckoned till morning, that as a Lion ſo will he break all my bones; from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.* How often do we hear ſuch ſaying, Oh! what will become of me, ſhould I dye in ſuch a ſtate as I now am in! in ſuch horror and amazement! where will my guilty ſoul then go! Alas! I am no way prepared to give up my accounts, and yet am like every moment to be called away; If I cannot bear theſe Pains, and this Wrath, what ſhall I do to bear an Eternal Hell! If I tremble ſo now, what ſhall I do when the blow is given, and the final Sentence paſt! I have but one change to make, and it is like to be a ſad and woful change, God knows! I dare neither live nor dye! Oh! what ſhall I do! whither ſhall I go? Stay I muſt not, and depart I dare not; I am now ſorely tormented, and muſt I be for ever and for ever ſo, and worſe too! I now ſee that the Gate is ſtrait, and the way is narrow, and that there will be few indeed that will be ſaved.

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The ſhadows of the Evening are ſtretched out upon me, and what ſhall I do if it prove an Eternal night? For as it is the glory of Faith, to ſhew us future things, as if actually preſent; and to give us joy from them ſo conſidered: So it is the torment of deſpair, to make poor diſtreſſed Souls believe they are even as in Hell, whileſt they are on Earth; and that they are actually ſcorched with that wrath that is to come in greater meaſures.

Thirteenthly, *From all theſe follow ſtrange diſcourſes and expreſſions of ſorrow*; they are forced to complain, to cry out, and to weep bitterly, *Job* 7. 11. *Therefore I will not refrain my mouth, I will ſpeak in the anguiſh of my ſpirit, I will complain in the bitterneſs of my ſoul.* They ſpeak without any manner of concern or fear, things that both vex themſelves, and make others tremble; they ſcarce care what they ſay of God or of themſelves. *My ſoul is weary of my life, I will leave my complaint upon my ſelf; I will ſpeak in the bitterneſs of my ſoul*, Job 10. 1, 3. Nay they frequently proceed to wiſh they had *never been born*, knowing it is better not to be, than to be miſerable. *Job* 3. *Job* 10. 16, 17, 18. Nay, they may proceed ſo far, as to wiſh even to be deſtroyed that they may know the worſt: Such is the ſorrow of their hearts, and ſo violent, *Job* 6. 26. *Do ye imagine to reprove words, and to reprove the ſpeeches of one that is deſperate, which are as wind!* And there are two things that make their ſorrows more ſorrowful:

1. As comparing their ſtate with that of others.

2. As

2. As with their own former ſtate.

1. *It makes them more ſad when they conſider the caſe of others*; with what peace and joy they live, with what hope and comfort, whileſt they are drowned in ſorrows. Others, ſays the *deſerted Soul*, can ſing the Praiſes of God with delight, whileſt I am overwhelmed, and my Harp is hung upon the Willows; others can go into the ſolemn Aſſemblies, and hear his Word, but I am confined in my thick darkneſs, and dare not go thither; others have the hope of Heaven, and I have the dayly fear of Hell; I am like to ſee others enter into Glory, and my ſelf ſhut out; Oh! what have my ſins done! If I had not greatly ſinned, I might have had as much quietneſs, and comfort, and peace as they; and I that am now cut down for my unfruitfulneſs, might have been ſerving God with as much chearfulneſs, and light, and hope as they do.

2. *When the deſerted ſoul compares its preſent with its former ſtate.* To a perſon in miſery, it is a great increaſe of miſery to have been once happy: It was to *David* an occaſion of new Tears, when he remembred his former Joys, *Pſal.* 42. 3, 4. Time was, ſays the poor Soul, when I thought of God with comfort, and when I thought of him as my own God; and to loſe a God that I once enjoyed, is the Loſs of all my Loſſes; and of all my Terrors the moſt Terrible. Time was, when I could go and pray to him, and eaſe my ſelf in Prayer; but now I have no boldneſs, no hope, no ſucceſs in Prayer, I cannot call him *my Father* any more.

Time

Time was, when I could read the Bible, and treaſure up the Promiſes, and ſurvey the Land of *Canaan* as my own inheritance; but now I dare not look into the Word, leſt I read my own Condemnation there. The Sabbath was formerly to me as one of *the days of Heaven*; but now it is alſo, as well as the reſt, a ſad and a mournful day. I formerly rejoyced in the name of Chriſt, *I ſat under his ſhadow*, Cant. 8. 10. I was in his eyes as one that found favour; but now my ſoul is like the deſerts of *Arabia*, I am ſcorched with burning heat. From how great an height have I fallen! How fair was I once for Heaven, and for Salvation, and now am like to come ſhort of it! I was once flouriſhing in the Courts of the Lord, and now all my Fruit is blaſted and withered away; *his dew laid all night upon my branches*; but now I am like the Mountains of *Gilboa*, no Rain falls upon me. Had I never heard of Heaven, I could not have been ſo miſerable as I now am; Had I never known God, the loſs of him had not been ſo terrible as now it is like to be. *Job* 29. 2, 3. *Oh! that I were as in months paſt, as in the days when God preſerved me; When his Candle ſhined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkneſs*! Theſe are ſome of the ſorrows that deſerted Souls often meet withal; and indeed, but a ſmall part of what they feel in this dark and ſtormy night. Before I proceed any further, I will anſwer two Objections, for I foreſee, that againſt what I have ſaid, ſome may object.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Anſwering ſome Objections; and of the further doleful ſtate of a deſerted Soul; and whence it is that God is pleaſed to ſuffer a very Tempeſtuous and Stormy Night to come upon his Servants in this World.

Obj. 1. YOU *make a great deal of noiſe and pother about deſertions, and God's forſaking of the ſoul*; and it is nothing in the world but *Fancy or Imagination*, and the whimſies and the fumes of Melancholly.

Anſw. It is no new thing for us to hear ſuch Language from Atheiſtical and Prophane People; from men that are covered with ignorance and ſloth: With *ignorance*, becauſe they know not the ways of God and his diſpenſations; and *ſloth*, becauſe they will not ſearch into the Methods of his Government. To grant them for once, that it is Imagination, it is not the leſs tormenting becauſe it is ſo; for a Man that ſtrongly imagines himſelf to be miſerable, is truly miſerable; if a man think himſelf unhappy, he is ſo, whileſt that thought remains: But then they would do well, could they but once obtain of themſelves leave to conſider a little; they would find reaſon to ſuſpect their own fooliſh Objections. Who was a Man, as appears by what we read of him, more diſtreſſed with the ſenſe of God's Anger, than *David*? yet he

he was of a Musical and a pleasant Temper, of a Ruddy and a Sanguine Constitution. Do they think that such a great Prince as *Job* was, was led meerly by humour and by fancy, when he complains so much of the Arrows of the Almighty? Or, that *Heman*, *Asaph*, and many others, were men of no clear understandings? It is their ignorant Pride that makes them to talk so boldly of the Judgments of God which they do not understand; but if ever their Consciences be awakened with a sense of guilt, they'll find, in what I have now discoursed, something more terrible than Fancy or Imagination.

Obj. 2. *You take a way to discourage men from all Religion.* If it be such a mournful business, it is better to let it alone, and to rejoyce and to be merry, and to take our ease and our pleasure. Go by your selves to Heaven, if you will, we'll joyn our selves to more chearful Companions; we see those that are gay and brisk, that know no sorrow while they live, and that dye in peace: and to their Assembly we will unite our selves. In Answer to this, I desire such to consider, That it is not our Religion that is the Cause of our sorrows; but our wandrings and our deviation from it. If we were always obedient, we should have an Eternal day; our heavenly Father chastises us because we are undutiful; and he does not delight to grieve the Children of Men; and even in these necessary Corrections, he carries on a profitable design for our future and final good. 'Tis true, this

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World is a Vale of Tears, this imperfect state that we are in on Earth, is a state of sorrow; but here is the excellency of Religion, it will turn our present night into a brighter day, and all our sorrows into joy; whereas if you slight God, you may have joy a while, and it is but a little while; but remember that your sorrows are to come. Remember, that in this World *Lazarus* had his evil things, and the Rich Man his good things; but after death, *Lazarus* was comforted, and the other tormented. Whether had you rather weep for a night, or weep for ever? Do not bless the wicked in your thoughts, their night is coming, and a far more long and doleful night; God will reckon with you that are now full of joy, for all your vain Mirth, for all your loud Laughters, and your scornful Looks; for all your Censures of Religion, and the Satyrical aspersions that you throw upon it. Now you may say, We'll drink sorrow away; we'll not perplex our minds with sad melancholly thoughts: But will Death never come? Can you go with this jolly temper into the silent Grave? Can you go jesting and laughing to the Bar of the Eternal God? What will come of all your mirth when you appear there? when you must hear your Sentence, and your final Doom? What will come of you, when the Doom is past, and the Judge will not be intreated, and the door is shut? Whither will you go! whither, but to the place where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth? Let no Man be discouraged at Religion for its present sorrows and tribulations; but look beyond

yond this night, unto the coming-day, a day full of light, and full of joy.

But to proceed: 1. *To loſe the ſenſe of God's favour, is of all others the moſt dreadful loſs.* In other troubles the reſolution and courage of a man will greatly diminiſh the ſenſe of evil; but in this caſe nothing of that will avail; *a wounded ſpirit who can bear!* God's departure from the ſoul, is like the departure of the ſoul from the body; it is painful and very terrible; only with this difference, that the poor abandon'd body at the ſame time that it loſes life, is uncapable of pain; but the deſerted ſoul is not only benighted, but vaſtly perplext, and in ſore anguiſh and tribulation. 'Tis, as when after the ſetting of the Sun, violent tempeſts and ſtorms ariſe, which the darkneſs and horror of the night makes to be more amazing; in an heart thus forlorn, there is a flaming, tormenting ſenſe of guilt and condemnation; nothing is more delicate and tender than the ſoul; nothing capable of grief more acute than that is; in other loſſes there remains ſomething comfortable; if we loſe our friends, we have a God that is unchangeable, and to whom we may repair for conſolation; but in this caſe he himſelf is apprehended to be gone; the loſs of honour, the ſmart of diſeaſes, the fury of perſecution, the hatred and the rage of men, and death it ſelf, are tolerable things to this; and tho there is a tenderneſs in humane nature, by which it muſt be ſomewhat ſenſible of theſe evils, yet there are abundance of Conſiderations that will wipe our tears away; in this mournful night there

is nothing but anguiſh of Conſcience that draws up a proceſs againſt it ſelf, that preſents it ſelf as before the Tribunal of God, without hope of pardon or eſcape; and the weight of Mountains would not be a load ſo heavy as this; it is a night wherein we are kept waking with our danger, whether we will or not. Wicked men, tho they have as great a burden, yet are not ſenſible, they feel not the bitterneſs of ſin; they are like fiſhes bred in the Sea, that taſt not the ſaltneſs of the water; they are like ſwine, that find ſomething agreeable to their meaner appetites, even in that which is moſt nauſeous to other Creatures. When they ſin, they feel not the weight of it, for it is their nature to do amiſs; their iniquities are like waters, that are not heavy in their own Element; as Intellectual joy is moſt refin'd, pure and durable; ſo is the trouble of the mind of all others moſt troubleſome. *Job* 6. 2, 3. *Oh that my grief were throughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balance together; for now it would be heavier than the ſand of the Sea, therefore my words are ſwallowed up.*

2. *'Tis attended uſually with great pain of body too, and ſo a man is wounded and diſtreſt in every part. There is no ſoundneſs in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger,* ſays *David. The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poyſon whereof drinketh up my ſpirit,* Job 6. 4. Sorrow of heart contracts the natural ſpirits, makes all their motions ſlow and feeble; and the poor afflicted body does uſually decline and waſt away; and therefore, ſaith *Heman, My ſoul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.* In this inward diſtreſs,

diſtreſs, we find our ſtrength decay and melt, even as wax before the fire; for ſorrow, that is an ingrateful languor of the ſoul *, darkneth the ſpirits, obſcures the judgment, blinds the memory, as to all pleaſant things, and beclouds the lucid part of the mind; cauſes the lamp of life to burn weakly: In this troubled condition the perſon cannot be without a countenance that is pale, and wan, and dejected, like one that is ſeized with ſtrong fear and conſternation; all his motions are ſluggiſh, and no ſprightlineſs nor activity remains. *Prov.* 17. 22. *A merry heart doth good, like a Medicine; but a broken ſpirit drieth the bones.* Hence come thoſe frequent complaints in Scripture: *My moiſture is turned into the drought of Summer: I am like a bottle in the ſmoke: my ſoul cleaveth unto the duſt: my face is foul with weeping, and on my eye-lids is the ſhadow of death,* Job 16. 16. Job 30. 17, 18, 19. *My bones are pierced in me, in the night ſeaſon, and my ſinews take no reſt; by the great force of my diſeaſe is my garments changed. He hath caſt me into the mire, and I am become like duſt and aſhes.* Many times indeed the trouble of the ſoul does begin from the weakneſs and indiſpoſition of the body. Long affliction, without any proſpect of remedy, does in proceſs of time begin to diſtreſs the ſoul it ſelf. *David* was a man often exerciſed with ſickneſs, and the rage of enemies; and in all the inſtances almoſt that we meet with in the *Pſalms*, we may obobſerve * that the outward occaſions of trouble, brought him under an apprehenſion of the wrath of God for his ſin, *Pſal.* 6. 1, 2. and the reaſon given, *ver.* 5, 6. all his griefs running in-

* Natural Hiſtory of the Paſſions, *p.* 152.

* Dr. *Gilpin*'s Treatiſe of Temptat: Part 2. *p.* 296.

to this more terrble thought, That God was his enemy; as little Brooks loſe themſelves in a great River, and change their name and nature; it moſt frequently happens, that when our pain is long, and ſharp, and helpleſs, and unavoidable, we begin to queſtion the ſincerity of our eſtate towards God, tho at its firſt aſſault we had few doubts or fears about it. Long weaknes of body makes the ſoul more ſuſceptible of trouble, and uneaſie thoughts.

I would have more largely inſiſted on the troubles of a deſerted ſoul, but that I find them ſo excellently deſcribed by Dr. *Gilpin in the ſecond part of his Learned and Experimental Treatiſe of Satan's Temptations*, and to that I muſt refer my Reader; as not knowing any other Book that does with ſo much exactneſs and truth ſet forth theſe inward and Spiritual afflictions. I now proceed to enquire why God ſuffers ſuch a night, ſo tempeſtuous and ſo frightful, to come upon his ſervants?

1. *That they may be conformable to Chriſt.* As they are tempted and diſtreſs'd, ſo was he; as it is with their ſouls a ſeaſon of darkneſs, ſo was it alſo with his holy ſoul, that was full of amazement under a ſenſe of God's wrath; tho he never deſpaired indeed, as many of his ſervants are apt to do under the violence of ſorrow, *Iſa.* 53. 3. *He was a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief:* When he was ſo ſadned for our ſakes, 'tis reaſonable to think that we ſhould ſometimes taſte of the bitter cup, and not always rejoyce and be at eaſe. If God ſpared not his only Son, why ſhould we expect to feel nothing

thing but what is very mild and gentle? And our Lord has told us, *The world ſhall rejoyce, but you ſhall be ſorrowful*, Joh. 16. from *v.* 20. to *v.* 22. The ſufferings of Chriſt were to give a ſatisfaction to the Divine Juſtice; ours are not to be lookt upon with ſuch an eye; by theſe terrors and deſertions we learn to value and eſteem the love of Chriſt, who was pleaſed to redeem us when it coſt him ſo very dear, and who was pleaſed not to decline the field of Battel, tho it was not to be managed without vaſt labour, and a mighty pain. And ſays the Apoſtle, *Rejoyce, in as much as ye are partakers of Chriſt's ſufferings*, 1 Pet. 4. 13.

Secondly, *Another reaſon may be, Becauſe our fall and our ruin came by pleaſure.* A delight it was, tho a very ſhort one, that made our forefather *Adam* Apoſtatize; and it is equitable that we ſhould be cured by ſomething contrary to that which occaſioned our diſeaſe, ſeeing our joys are dangerous; he makes our grief and ſorrows to be healthful and Medicinal.

Thirdly, *'Tis a very proper ſeaſon wherein to be ſorrowful.* Among all the other excellent appointments of Providence, this is one, That there ſhould be a time to weep, *Eccleſ.* 3. 4. There is in this weeping-night nothing ſtrange or uncouth; all our fathers have in ſome reſpect paſſed under a Cloud, and a Cloud that has diſſolved in rain, and which has given to the good Pilgrims much trouble as they went along. 1 Pet. 2. 6. *Now for a ſeaſon ye are in heavineſs through manifold temptations.* 'Tis no more ſtrange to ſee mourning in the Church on Earth, than

to see storms or snow in Winter; every thing is beautiful in its season; and so this affliction is. The night is useful to the world, tho not so pleasant as the day; our sickly state will not admit us to have nothing but what is grateful to our pallats; the wise God therefore, many times instead of very pleasant things, confers the best upon us; we must allow the Great Master of the Family to maintain its order, prosperity, and welfare by his own methods; to chastise us when, and how, and as long as he pleaseth; for his strokes, tho very smart, yet are still very just; and it is in order to some better thing that he designs for us, that at the present we are made to grieve; for grief, as one observes* is an imperfect passion, not made for it self, but for some higher use; as also, all the rest of the declining affections are; as Hatred for Love, Fear for Confidence, and the like; and so Sorrow for Joy, unto which it is subservient; as launcing and searing are not for themselves, but for ease and remedy; and a bitter potion is not for sickness, which it may cause for a time, but for health; so Sorrow is made for Joy, and Joy is the end of Sorrow; and God, we may be sure, will have his end.

* Dr. *Harris's* Serm. *p.* 277.

IV. *To shew his own Soveraignty both in afflicting and comforting.* He causes such a Prince as *Job* to sit upon a Dunghill, in anguish and trouble, whilest another sits in unclouded Glory on the Throne. He pulls down one, and sets up another; and does whatsoever he will in Heaven or Earth; 'tis the withdrawing of his Spirit that

that is an occasion of mourning to the soul; and he variously acts upon it; for tho he deny not what is absolutely necessary to the being of the Christian; yet he many times does not vouchsafe to give what would make it very comfortable; he upon wise Reasons does many times suffer the hearts of his people to be overwhelmed with sorrow, when he could make them brim-full of joy; as in nature he lets the Earth gape for thirst, when he could immediately refresh it with seasonable showers. Who in all this mysterious variety of his Administrations, can say unto him, What dost thou? Some Countries are desert, barren and forsaken, burnt up with scorching heat, and fill'd with Beasts of Prey; and others are inhabited and fruitful, and greatly blessed, and he sees fit to have the parts of his Dominions thus qualified. Some does he draw with *the sweet savour of his Ointments*; they perceive nothing but what is grateful and refreshing; but others he sorely terrifies with the greatness of his Power, his Holiness and Majesty; and they never eat, nor live with pleasure. The Captain of our Salvation causes some of his Soldiers to meet with much more formidable dangers than others do; they have more sweat, and fatigue, and toil, and painful duty, tho he will be sure himself to help them when they are ready to give way; the manner of his dispensations to his servants is various, both in life, and at death. Some are *chastned all the day long, and with sore pain upon their beds too*, whilest others have no pain at all; some go drooping to the Grave, bowed down with his dis-

diſpleaſure, whileſt his favour and his gracious eye makes others to go ſmiling thither. *Enoch* and *Elias* had a pleaſant Removal from the world; very ſhort, and very glorious was their paſſage hence; but the moſt part of men groan a long while before they are called away; and then he does it to ſhew his own *Power*, that when the wound appears to be deſperate, he can give a cure with a word. When the night is fulleſt of horror, he can bring the reviving day. When the ſtorms are higheſt, he need but ſay to the waves, to our doubts, and our fears, Be ſtill, and immediately there is a calm: What is not a God, and ſo great and ſo good a God able to do! He that produced from a meer Chaos, this beautiful and pleaſant World, need only ſay to us in the middle of our doleful darkneſs, Let there be light, and it ſhall be ſo. *Job* 5. 18. *He maketh ſore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole*; in acknowledgment of this Soveraign Ability it is that *David* prays, *Pſal.* 51. 8. *Make me to hear joy and gladneſs, that the bones which thou haſt broken may rejoice.* Why ſo? had not *Nathan* told him, That his ſin was pardoned? Yes; but all the teſtimonies of men are nothing without the inward witneſs of the Holy Spirit. God has committed to men the adminiſtration of his Word, but reſerves the Spirit to himſelf; that Spirit which gives conſolation to our hearts, and peace to our Conſciences. When *Mary* and *Martha* were in ſorrow for their Brother's death, 'tis ſaid, *Joh.* 11. 19. *Many of the Jews came from Jeruſalem to comfort them*; but they received no comfort till Chriſt himſelf came thither.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Shewing whence it is, that Melancholly and Troubled People love Solitarineſs; and whence it is, that ſerious Perſons are not ſo light and frothy in their Converſations, as others are. With ſome other Inferences deducible from the foregoing Doctrine. With ſome Advices to thoſe that have never been deſerted, and to ſuch as are complaining that they are ſo.

Inf. 1. *Hence you ſee the Reaſon why People in trouble love Solitarineſs.* They are full of Sorrow; and Sorrow, if it have taken deep root, is naturally reſerved, and flies all Converſation. Grief is a thing that is very ſilent and private. Thoſe People that are very Talkative and Clamorous in their Sorrows, are never very ſorrowful. Some are apt to wonder, *why Melancholly People delight to be ſo much alone*; and I'll tell them the reaſon of it: 1. Becauſe the diſorder'd Humours of their Bodies alter their Temper, their Humours, and their Inclinations, that they are no more the ſame that they uſe to be; their very Diſtemper is averſe to what is joyous and diverting; and they that wonder at them, may as wiſely wonder why they will be diſeaſed, which they would not be, if they knew how to help it; but the

Diſeaſe

Disease of Melancholly is so obstinate, and so unknown to all but those that have it, that nothing but the Power of God can totally overthrow it; and I know no other cure for it. 2. *Another Reason why they chuse to be alone*, is, Because People do not generally mind what they say, nor believe them, but rather deride them, which they do not use so cruelly to do with those that are in other Distempers; and no Man is to be blamed for avoiding Society, when they do not afford the common Credit to his Words that is due to the rest of Men. But 3. Another, and the principal Reason why People in Trouble and Sadness chuse to be alone, is, Because they generally apprehend themselves singled out to be the Marks of God's peculiar Displeasure; and they are often by their sharp Afflictions a terror to themselves, and a wonder to others. It even breaks their hearts to see how low they are fallen, how oppressed, that were once as easy, as pleasant, as full of hope as others are. Job 6. 21. *Ye see my casting down, and are afraid.* Psalm 71. 7. *I am as a wonder unto many.* And it is usually unpleasant to others to be with them. Psalm 88. 18. *Lover and friend hast thou put far from me: and mine acquaintance into darkness.* And tho it was not so with the Friends of *Job*, to see a Man whom they had once known Happy, to be so Miserable; one whom they had seen so very Prosperous, to be so very Poor, in such sorry, forlorn Circumstances, did greatly affect them; he, poor Man, was changed, they knew him not, Job 2. 12, 13. *And when they lift up their eyes afar off, and*

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knew him not, they lift up their voice, and wept; and they rent every one his mantle, and ſprinkled duſt upon their heads towards heaven. So they ſat down with him upon the ground ſeven days and ſeven nights, and none ſpake a word to him, for they ſaw that his grief was very great. As the Prophet repreſents one under ſpiritual and great Afflictions, that *he ſitteth alone, and keepeth ſilence*, Lam. 3. 28.

Inf. 2. *Hence we ſee the Reaſon why the Servants of God have not ſuch light and frothy ſpirits as others.* They do not indeed always mourn, but even when they rejoice, 'tis with a ſerious and ſolid Joy. Their own Sins, and the fear they have of ſinning, and the concern they have for the Sins of others, cauſe them to walk ſoftly. The many Miſeries to which they are obnoxious, and the many that they ſee the Church of God groaning under, keep them from innumerable Follies, from many Lightneſſes and Vanities in Converſation, which others do not ſcruple; tho frequently when their Countenances are grave, their Hearts are full of the moſt lively joys.

Inf. 3. *What a mean ſorry thing a Chriſtian is many times in this World, as to his outward appearance.* A Mourner never makes ſo great a ſhew as one in Triumph does. His Graces, and his Excellencies are many times like the Ground in Winter, covered with Rain and Storm, which make him not to be much regarded; becauſe Chriſt was *a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief*, there-

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fore the *Jews ſaw no beauty or comelineſs in him, that they ſhould deſire him; they hid their faces from him, becauſe he was ſtricken, ſmitten of God, and afflicted*, Iſaiah 53. 3, 4. The life of all Believers is hid with God in Chriſt, *Col.* 3. 3. 'Tis maintained with ſuitable nouriſhment, formed by the Goſpel, and preſerved by the Spirit; but becauſe of innumerable Temptations and Weakneſſes, the Glory of their Grace is very much eclipſed; 'tis hidden under a thouſand Croſſes and Infirmities, and does not yet appear in the cleareſt Light. A Chriſtian in this World is like a King, that Travels *Incognito* in a ſtrange Land; he is courſly treated by Men that do not know the greatneſs of his Birth and Quality; he Travels but in the habit of a Pilgrim, and cloathed with Heavineſs, and hath Tears for his Meat and Drink. Or he is as the Sun aſcending to his Meridian, but obſcured from our ſight with many thick and watry Clouds. Job 26. 27, 28. *When I looked for good, then evil came unto me: and when I waited for light, there came darkneſs. My bowels boiled, and reſted not: the days of affliction prevented me. I went mourning without the Sun: I ſtood up, and cried in the congregation.* Now the Servants of God are going to the Port of Bleſſedneſs, as *Jonas* to the Shore covered with the Waters of Affliction. They ſeem now to a careleſs Eye, like the Seed that is buried in the Ground, to be quite caſt away; but they ſhall ariſe with new Luſtre.

Inf. 4. *This aſſures us, that there is another, and a more happy Life after this. Bleſſed are they that mourn,*

mourn, *for they ſhall be comforted*, Matth. 5. 4. *He that goeth forth weeping*, &c. Pſalm 126. 6. John 16. 16. This Sorrow is the forerunner of abiding Joy; theſe Tears of holy Perſons are fruitful and profitable Tears; and thoſe Souls that now are vext with the Sins of others, and their own, ſhall ere long be ſweetly refreſht; the Night is long and doleful, but the Morning comes that will cauſe them to forget all their former trouble. God puts their Tears into his Bottles, tho in appearance they fall upon the Earth unregarded, and ſeem to be loſt, even then they fall into the Lap of his Providence, which will make them to fructify by his Bleſſing, and to their eternal Joy. This little Grain that is ſown, will return back again into their boſoms with meaſure filled up, and running over; and their floods of Tears that now ſurrounded them, ſhall be turned into Rivers of Pleaſure for evermore*. *If in this life only we had hope, we were of all men moſt miſerable*, 1 Cor. 15. 19. Miſerable indeed, if we were obliged to bear ſo many Croſſes, to meet ſo many Dangers, and ſuch various Calamities, and to have no reward; but thanks be to God, this is not our caſe. Whileſt we look upon this World, upon the manifold Evils that are here, we weep; but when we lift up our Eyes to that pure, and calm, and bleſſed World that is above, we may be chearful and rejoyce; here we are toſt among Rocks and Shelves, with threatning Waves, and high Winds; but there we behold our reſt. In this Wilderneſs we are purſued with

* *Charles Recueil. de Sermons*, p. 119.

with the roaring Lyons, annoyed with Hunger, and with Thirſt, and other Inconveniencies; but we are all the while in our Journey to the promiſed Land, and ſhortly ſhall be there, and then we ſhall receive a bleſſed period of all our Conflicts, and our Difficulties.

Inf. 5. *Seeing there is ſuch a weeping Night to the Servants of God, this verifies and confirms that Maxim of the Goſpel, That ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leads to life.* Thither muſt we go through the very depths, and wade through many Seas of grief, though all others find it to be difficult, becauſe of the frequent ſelf-denials and mortifications to which they are obliged; becauſe of the many ſins that beſet them, and the many ſufferings they muſt undergo; yet deſerted Souls find it to be a ſtrait way indeed, and to them it is covered with Thorns and Bryars; and though you, *whoſe Mountain is yt ſtrong*, whoſe hopes are yet unſhaken, think it eaſie; yet if ever you come to be ſorely tempted, to be afflicted with long and ſharp Tryals; if you come to be greatly pained in your Bodies, and greatly troubled in your Souls; if you be awakened with the ſight of Hell, and the threatnings of the Law, and broken with the terrors of the Almighty; you will joyn your cry to ours, and ſay, That the way is very ſtrait: *Job*, and *Heman*, and *Aſaph*, and *David*, and all others have found it to be ſo. There is indeed a Lion in the way, but that muſt not be an excuſe to ſloth, but a motive to our Courage; we muſt take the more caution,

and

and be more watchful to avoid him. The ſenſe ſo God's diſpleaſure, is as an hot Furnace, into which many of his Children are thrown, though they ſhall come out unhurt; and when they are come forth, they ſhall be like Gold: yet it is grievous to Senſe, when they muſt be ſaved ſo as by Fire; when they muſt come to their Crown by Racks and Torments, by Anguiſh and Tribulation; and to Heaven by the very Gates of Hell.

I ſhall cloſe this Chapter with two Exhortations: 1. *With reſpect to thoſe with whom it is yet day, and who have never been forſaken of God.* And 2. *To ſuch diſconſolate ſouls, with whom it is as yet a weeping and a mourning Night.*

1. *If you have not been forſaken, and have ever had the light of God's Countenance ſhining on you, beware of the approach of Night*: Prevent as much as you can the declining of the Day. I have ſhewed you into what a Pit I and ſome others have fallen; take warning by our danger, and take heed leſt you alſo come into the like doleful Caſe. You have the ſmiles of your Heavenly Father, you have been ever with him; Oh! do not provoke him to turn thoſe reviving ſmiles into killing frowns; be not ſecure, be not ſelf-confident, be not faithleſs, but believe and guard your Faith, and be watchful; for *your Enemy, the Devil, goes about ſeeking whom he may devour.* Work while it is day, for when this night comes, I can aſſure you by ſad experience, that you cannot work. Pray now with fervour, for then you cannot Pray; Now Read,

and Hear the Word of God, for then you will find no taſte even in the Bread of Life. Beware of Indifference and of Lukewarmneſs; beware of grieving the Spirit, and of ſlighting his motions; for all theſe are the ſhadows of this doleful night. Your day is comfortable, and your journey pleaſant, while the Sun ſhines; Oh! make haſt to your Eternal home, leſt your feet ſtumble on the dark Mountains: If you linger, wrath will overtake you, terrible and amazing wrath, ſuch as you cannot now believe, and ſuch as you then cannot bear. Credit the Report that we bring you from the Land of darkneſs, and go not in the way that will lead you thither; We have fallen among Thieves and Robbers, among Temptations, and Dangers, and Tryals, that deprived us of all our Comforts; do not you tread a path where you will ſurely be ſet upon, and greatly wounded, if you do eſcape; though it may be you ſay, as *Job* 29. 18. *I ſhall dye in my neſt, and multiply my days as the ſand.*

2. *Do not ſeverely judge or cenſure perſons under ſpiritual trouble*; It is night with them indeed, but they may live to ſee the morning come. God has overthrown them, but he will build them up again; they are in darkneſs, but rejoice not over them, for he will be a light unto them. Speak not to the hurt of thoſe that he has wounded; look not on with unconcernedneſs, or a ſecret pleaſure, in the time of your Brother's trouble; *Job* 30. 11. *Becauſe he hath looſed my cord and afflicted me, they have alſo let looſe the bridle before me.* Do not cenſure theſe

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Myſterious Diſpenſations of God and of his Providence; ſtay till you ſee the beautiful ſtructure that he will cauſe to riſe from theſe Ruins; When they are tempted by the Devil, do not you with *Job*'s Friends play the Devils to, and inſult over them, or encreaſe their miſery: It was a very great ſin in thoſe good men, to aggravate his trouble by their raſh diſcourſes, and their ſiniſter interpretations of it. God himſelf decided the caſe for his Servant, and told them, that they had not ſpoken of him the things that were right. Be not haſty to judge of perſons who are weeping, nay, even deſpairing for their ſins; They are in bitterneſs, but ſuch as God may ſpeedily remove; He may change their Wilderneſs into a Paradiſe; He will perfect his Power in their Weakneſs, turn their Evils into Good, and their Darkneſs into a marvellous Light; and ſtay till you ſee the end of the Lord. He has taken their Comforts from them to improve them, and to reſtore them to them upon better terms; He has removed their Pots of Water, but will, it may be, ſend them back full of Wine: For (as one obſerves) God is wont to bring moſt of his greateſt ends about, by ſeeming to look quite another way from what he hath a ſpecial purpoſe to bring to paſs; He ſeldom proceeds in a direct way to his Ends; or in ſuch a way as the Creature would think ſtood moſt with Reaſon to take; but when his buſineſs lies in the Eaſt, he takes his Journey, as it were, full Weſt; and when he has a mind to build, he batters down; when his deſign is for Light, his method and his way

is through the greateſt darkneſs. Let *the Great Inſtance of Job*, for ever repreſs our bold Cenſures of afflicted and miſerable people; Who would have thought that a Man ſo diſtreſſed, ſhould ever have been delivered! That one that had ſo many pains, ſhould be cured! one ſo poor, ſo derided, ſo ſcorned by Drunkards, and Boys, and the meaneſt of the people, ſhould be honoured and eſteemed again! And yet all this happened to him, *his latter end was better than his beginning*; he lived to ſee the Funeral of his Griefs, and the Reſurrection of his Comforts; the Lord that had afflicted him, took off his heavy hand, and turned again his Captivity; He re-eſtabliſhed him in all his former ſplendor, and made him, for his ſhort darkneſs, to ſhine with a double glory, and *gave him twice as much as he had before*; and for a year or two of trouble, gave him many pleaſant long years of Joy, till he *was old and full of days*; till he was ſatisfied with living, and calmly deſired to dye. And the ſcope of the Book of *Job* is (as Dr. *Patrick* quotes it from *Maimonides*) to eſtabliſh the great Article of Providence, and thereby to preſerve us from Error, in thinking that God's Knowledg is like our Knowledg; or his Intention, Providence and Government, like our Intention, Providence and Government; which foundation being laid, nothing will ſeem hard to a Man, whatſoever happens; nor will he fall into dubious thoughts concerning God, whether he knows what is befallen us or no, and whether he takes any care of us; but rather he will be inflamed the more vehemently in the

Love

Love of God, as is ſaid in the end of this Prophecy, *Wherefore I abhor my ſelf, and repent in duſt and aſhes.* So ſay our Wiſe men, They that act out of Love, will rejoyce in Chaſtiſements; ſee *James* 5. 11.

As to *you with whom it is yet night*, I ſhall only add this, Though I am my ſelf come as to the quiet ſhore, yet I ſympathize with you that are yet labouring in the deep: You are *afflicted and toſt with tempeſts*; but as in *Iſa.* 54. from 9. to 11. *The mountains ſhall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindneſs ſhall not depart from thee, neither ſhall the covenant of my peace be removed, ſaith the Lord that hath mercy on thee. Oh thou afflicted, toſſed with tempeſts and not comforted; behold, I will lay thy ſtones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with Saphirs.* I know you think it is a long night, and ſo it is, but it is not Eternal, the day will break, and the ſhadows flee away; your wiſe Phyſician is preparing Cordials for your Hearts, and Balſom for your Wounds. Let him have your deſires, to him addreſs your Prayers, with your weaker Arms be ſtill reaching after him; you are ſcorched with wrath, but he will be a refreſhment to your heat; you are in darkneſs, but he is the Sun of Righteouſneſs, that will chaſe all the Clouds away: Fly to this *City of Refuge*, part for this *Fountain of Living Waters*; and while you are condemned in your own thoughts, look to this Advocate and Mediator, and he will plead your Cauſe; the wrath that burns you, may be hot as Hell, but his Blood will extinguiſh the tormenting flame; the Devil may be

too ſtrong for you, beg therefore help of this Jeſus who has overcome him, and who will teach you to get the victory. He takes pleaſure in helping ſuch as have no helper; and when there is none to deliver you, his own Arm will bring Salvation: *He hath born our grief, and with his ſtripes we are healed.* And truſting in his ſatisfaction, you may freely implore the Mercy of his Father, nay, even appeal to his Juſtice; for he will not have two payments for the ſame debt. You may ſay, Thou haſt promiſed to pardon ſin for the ſake of thy well-beloved Son; Let it be unto me according to thy word. You may in vain complain of your troubles to thoſe that have never felt the like; they may grieve you more by their harſh expreſſions; but remember, that when you go to Chriſt for help, you go to one that is experienced, to one that has taſted of the ſame bitter Cup; to one that was himſelf forſaken of God for a ſeaſon, and knows how ſad it is with you in the like Caſe: And *thoſe that come to him, he will in no wiſe caſt out.*

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the great joy that fills a Soul, when the favour of God returns to it, after having been long in darkneſs; And the joy is great in ſeveral reſpects, As it was unexpected; As it diſcovers God to be reconciled, and gives the mourner a poſſeſſion of Chriſt by faith, through the influence of the Holy Spirit; It revives his Graces, delivers him from the inſulting of the Devil; ſhews the ſoul its intereſt in the Promiſes.

JOy *cometh in the morning*, Pſal. 30. 5. Having in ſeveral Chapters, ſhewed what a mournful night it is to a deſerted ſoul, when God is withdrawn, and what paſſes then; it is now time to haſten to what is more pleaſant and reviving, according to the order of Divine Providence, which appointeth that where there has been weeping in the night, in the morning there ſhould be joy: Hence we may obſerve, *The return of Gods favour to a ſoul is matter of great joy to it*; or theſe words may denote the promptitude and readineſs of Divine Conſolations.

Three things are the uſual occaſions of joy, all which are in this caſe: 1. *The remembrance of ſome danger that we have lately eſcaped.* 2. *The*

poſſeſſion of a preſent good. 3. *The ſolid expectation of ſome future happineſs.*

Firſt, *The remembrance of a paſt danger, does occaſion a more lively ſenſe of joy.* As paſt joys renew our grief, and make our ſorrows more ſorrowful; ſo the griefs that are paſt give us a ſweeter and a better taſt of joy; after long ſickneſs and acute pain, 'tis very pleaſant to be at eaſe; 'tis pleaſant to reſt when we have been tired all the day with hard labour; the Laurels of a Soldier flouriſh with a purer Green when they have been obtained with a mighty difficulty; the danger of the Combat brightens the glory of the ſucceeding Triumph. 'Tis grateful to the Mariner to ſtand upon the firm Land, and from thence to behold the waves in which he had like to have been thrown away; one that has been long in chains, rejoyces to find himſelf at liberty; 'tis pleaſant after a man has been long athirſt, to be refreſht with the fountain of Living waters; it renders the joy more accompliſhed, and more ſatisfying, when refreſhment comes after long and grievous miſeries: After long deſpair, the leaſt beam of hope is more reviving; a man that has loſt his way all night, has cauſe to rejoice at the ſight of day. As to perſons newly converted, their faith is full of joy when they compare their former danger, and their preſent ſafety, their former darkneſs and the ſhining light that guides their paths; ſo to ſouls that have been in great anguiſh and tribulation for ſin, that have apprehended themſelves to be caſt out of the preſence of the Lord, 'tis very pleaſant to behold

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his face again; 'tis pleaſant to ſuch as by reaſon of their ſore affliction have been Companions to Owls and Dragons, to come into Religious Aſſemblies, and inſtead of ſolitary groans and tears, to join with the multitudes of thoſe that keep Holiday; the ſoul is then like that of the Returning Prodigal, finds it ſelf in the Arms and Embraces of a Loving Father, and well treated, when it looked, as it might juſtly, for rebukes and wrath. Thunder and Lightning, and Storms, make the calm and pleaſant weather more grateful to us; 'tis pleaſant after long abſence, to meet our friend again; we find a joy ſparkling in our eyes and in our breaſts, at the ſight of them whom we have not ſeen for many ſad and doleful years; whom yet we longed to ſee; and that which heightens our pleaſure is, when a bleſſing arrives to us that was *unexpected*; that mercy does fill us with the biggeſt joy which is extremely ſuitable to us, and which yet we hoped not to receive. The Crown ſat the eaſier upon *David*'s head, after he had ſo often thought that he ſhould have fallen by the hands of *Saul*. As life taſts with a better reliſh when there has been but one ſtep between us and death. With what Tranſports doth a kind mother ſee her Son coming home whom ſhe gave for loſt and dead! What a chearful Interview was that which *Jacob* had with his Son after he had ſo often thought that he had been torn to pieces! as ſoon as he came near, he fell upon his neck, and there the revived ſoul of the poor old man was ready even with exceſs of pleaſure to melt away; he never thought to have ſeen

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his Joſeph, his dear Joſeph any more; he was even with ſorrow for his apprehended death, going down to the Grave; and the news of his Son's welfare made him to be young, and live again; for at the hearing of it, the ſpirit of *Jacob* revived, and *Iſrael ſaid, It is enough, Joſeph my Son is yet alive, I will go and ſee him before I die*, Gen. 45.28. And ſo the *Jews* having liberty to return from *Babylon*, were ſo ſurprized with the favour of their ſudden deliverance, and the greatneſs of the mercy, that they could hardly think it true, it ſeem'd to be the meer effect of Imagination, which during the Interruption of our uſual thoughts, by ſleep put ſeveral deceits upon us, *Pſal.* 126. 1, 2. *When the Lord turned again the Captivity of Zion, we were like them that dreamed.* They were delivered in a manner illuſtrious and ſurprizing, and it is thus expreſt for three Reaſons: 1. A man does not foreſee what he dreams of; a man that is apt to be cheriſhed with ſound and refreſhing ſleep, does not know whether he ſhall dream or not. So this deliverance arrived to them when they thought not of it. 2. As it arrived without any pain to them that were delivered; as when we dream we are in repoſe, and are at no trouble; and this heightens the glory of a deliverance, and the love of the deliverer when the perſon delivered takes no care about it. 3. This deliverance was above all that they could hope for; as if a man dreamed of ſomething like it, but which he ſaw not when he was awake, for ſuch are the *Chymera's* which the Imagination then forms, and which fall not under the notice of

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our ſenſes; ſuch a thing was never heard or ſeen before *.

* Monſieu. *Charles* in loc.

The return of comfort to a Soul that was even expiring in grief and ſadneſs, is like the raiſing of *Lazarus* to his mourning Siſters; they thought that if the Lord had been there, he had not died; but they did not in the leaſt think that he ſhould be raiſed again. The review of our former miſeries does encreaſe the ſenſe of preſent happineſs; the light which the Grace of the Goſpel brought into the world, and that diſſipated the obſcurities that compaſſed it about, made the Apoſtles full of admiration, and of wonder; when they thought of their former ignorance and error, and the light and knowledg that God had given them, ever are they wondring at the Riches of his Grace, that inſtead of the corruption in which they were plunged, gave them Sanctification, Joy and Hope: What a ſurprize was it to the poor Shepherds that were in the field, watching their flock by night, *Luk.* 2. 9. to ſee an Angel and the Glory of the Lord ſhining round about them! To ſee ſuch a Glory when they thought of nothing leſs, nor did expect ſo great a Grace *; but 'tis uſual with God to beſtow the moſt eminent favours when men do not look for them; as Chriſt came to ſeek Sinners when they thought not of him, and when their minds were filled with other objects, *they were afraid*; for great objects, when they preſent themſelves ſuddenly to us, uſually give us much aſtoniſhment; for our ſpirit on theſe occaſions has not the liberty to uſe its forces, and they are

* *Claude Traitté de la Compoſition d'un Sermon*: p. 267.

are moſt frequently diſſipated, and that diſſipation cauſes fear; when a ſoul has long had in it ſelf the ſentence of condemnation, a pardon from God is very comfortable; our former darkneſs does encreaſe our preſent comfort, as ſhadows ſet off the light.

2. *Joy ariſes from the poſſeſſion of a preſent good:* Thus is the preſence of God unſpeakably ſweet to a ſoul from which he was once departed: 1. *As it now thinks upon him as reconciled:* 2. *As it has by faith poſſeſſion of Chriſt*, by whom his favour is reſtored; as our ſadneſs came by unbelief, ſo does our joy by faith. When it was in anguiſh, every thought of God was terrible and amazing, but now nothing is ſo refreſhing, ſo deſirable, ſo ſatisfying, as to think of him. *Pſal.* 94. 19. *In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my ſoul.* Now the poor ſinner does not look upon him as an enemy, but as a Father; ſees no more in his hand a flaming Sword, but a Scepter of Grace; hears no more his angry voice, but his gentle comfortable Calls and Invitations; according to that in *Iſa.* 66. 13. *As one whom his mother comforteth, ſo will I comfort you, and ye ſhall be comforted; and when ye ſee this, your heart ſhall rejoyce, and your bones ſhall flouriſh like an herb.* Oh what a joy is it to the ſoul to find God with it! to behold the wonders of his pardoning mercy! to ſee that all its unbelief, all its impatience, all its murmurings in its wilderneſs-condition, ſhall not finally obſtruct its Journey to the Land of Promiſe; to be pardoned, when they thought them-

themſelves actually dying in their guilt, does aggravate the mercy of eſcape. 'Tis true, God loves his people even when he is angry with them; he deſigns their good by the ſharpeſt and ſevereſt ſtrokes; and when he withdraws, 'tis that they may give a better welcome to him at his return; when our lower Region is moſt cloudy, the Sun is ſtill full of light; but it is pleaſant to us to ſee the clouds vaniſh, and the ſky clear, and to be refreſhed with his inliveningbeams again. God indeed is the ſame for ever; our diſtreſſes, our fears, and our troubles, do not alter his kindneſs; theſe ſeveral variations in us, make no change in him; no more than the ſeveral alterations in the air, infer a diverſity in the Sun, which is one and the ſame it ſelf, tho the changes be multiplied here below; but yet even Paternal wrath is wrath ſtill, and his Love is what we ought earneſtly to deſire, and at the manifeſtation of which we ſhould greatly rejoyce. It was once the ſaying of Mr. *Peacock* under great diſtreſs of Conſcience, *Oh God reconcile me to thee, that I may taſt one dram of thy Grace, by which my miſerable ſoul may receive comfort!* Such was his longing after him; and afterwards when the ſtorm began to ceaſe, being put in mind of God's mercy to him, he ſaid, *Oh the Sea is not ſo full of water, nor the Sun of light, as God is of Goodneſs; his Mercy is ten thouſand times more!* The good man long'd but for a drop before, and he had given him full draughts of Conſolation; ſo far are the ways of God above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts; in our ſore trials we

we think of God as a frowning Judge, but when we are deliver'd, we ſee him to be our beſt friend; that he is really kind to us, of whom we were ſo much afraid; who can expreſs the joy of having him at peace with us! There is a Heaven in the ſmiles of a Reconciled God. Figure to your ſelves, as one expreſſes it *, a perſon that is condemned to death for his Crimes, and who at the ſame time that he prepares to undergo it, ſees an Herald from the King bringing his pardon in his hand, and ſtops the Execution, by crying, Mercy, mercy, to the miſerable man! with what tranſports of joy does the poor Malefactor ſee this Meſſenger, and hear theſe tidings! ſuch and ſo pleaſant is the joy, that a deſerted Chriſtian finds after he heard the ſentence of ruin, and ſaw it near, when the Law condemned him, and his Conſcience ecchoed to the voice of the Law, to find that he is abſolved, that the Sentence is reverſed, and the ſins that made him afraid, are blotted out, then it is that the mourning ſoul dares to look up to God, as being no more at war with him, nor afraid of the Thunder of his Power; then it is refreſht with his ſweet and amiable Attributes, and then the diſorders and the pangs that it felt within, are vaniſht, and all is quiet; then it dwells not as in the ſhadow of death, nor as on the borders of eternal grief.

* *De Lang. Treize Sermons*, pag. 850.

Secondly, *As the deſerted ſoul does by faith obtain a poſſeſſion of Chriſt*, ſo it is full of joy; and Chriſt is both the Object and the Author of it; he

he has purchas'd it by his own blood, and has born our griefs, that we might not mourn for ever; the having of him is a conſtant inexhauſtible ſource of joy to the believer, to be poſſeſſed of this Saviour, who is the *brightneſs of the glory, and the expreſs Image of the Father.* His Word, his Wiſdom, his Love, and his Goodwill, the Treaſury of his Graces, in whom his Fulneſs dwells; this Divine Saviour is our Light that chaſes away the darkneſs of our night, and who with his Gracious hand dries our eyes; this is that Glorious Sun that ariſes with healing on his wings; that not only chears our hearts, but cures our wounds, diſpells the night, and makes the voice of ſighing to expire at the firſt dawning of the day; this is the Tree of Life, the Cœleſtial Manna, that gives us Immortality *. This is our *David* that defeats our Enemies; our *Solomon* that eſtabliſhes among us a ſweet and inviolable peace; he expiates our Crimes, and gives our minds reſt; he ſaves us from the wrath to come; he delivers us from our ſins, from Hell, from our ſlaviſh fears, and cauſes us at length in our darkeſt and moſt tempeſtuous nights to hear his Voice, ſaying, *It is I, be not afraid.* We are firſt ſadned by unbelief, and faith doth firſt revive us; and this faith is attended with joy and peace; when the poor deſerted ſoul begins to apprehend its Intereſt in Chriſt, how are all its apprehenſions changed, ſaying, Heretofore in my terrible anguiſh I thought that he was my certain enemy, that I had no portion in his Blood, nor any ſhare in his Interceſſion: That

* See *Daille* on *Phil.* IV. *v.* IV.

as

as I was under unbelief, ſo I ſhould be vaſtly more miſerable than thoſe that never heard of him, than Heathens and Pagans, and all the reſt of men to whom the Goſpel never came; I then thought and was fully perſwaded, that I ſhould not hear of him with comfort any more; I then thought that I ſhould ſee him coming in the Clouds to my terror; that I ſhould be placed at his left hand; and from thence be commanded to depart, and now he is come in a way of mercy and of love: He has pleaded for me, when I had nothing to ſay for my ſelf; and his Word has calmed the ſtorms that made me ſo much afraid. He caſt an eye of Love upon me, when I expected nothing but his frowns; now can I go and pray in his Encouraging Name; and now I have hope when I pray; his Satisfaction and his Interceſſion are both the conſtant fountains of my joy.

3. *This joy that comes after a night of ſad and mournful deſertion, is the work of the bleſſed Spirit*; who is ſtiled by way of Eminency, the *Comforter*: and Peace is one of the fruits of the Spirit; he cauſes us to cloſe with Chriſt, and to embrace the Promiſes: He aſſiſts our weakneſs, and teaches us to pray: He convinces us of ſin, and lays us low, that he may raiſe us up again: He humbles, and purifies, and fits our hearts for laſting and abiding joys; this joy is *not the product of a natural temper*, but a diſpoſition that hath its Original from Heaven, and leads us thither; it is not the pleaſant motion of our natural ſpirits, to which it owes its birth, but as our

grief

grief was in our ſouls, ſo the joy is in the ſame: as our Conſciences were diſquieted, ſo it is in them that he works a ſtillneſs and repoſe.

4. *This Joy revives our Graces:* In this mournful Night we were quite blaſted with the violence and fury of the ſtorm: We were like the Ground in Winter, deſtitute and forlorn, and no fruit appeared: but the manifeſtation of God's favour is to us as the return of Spring, *Cant.* 2. 11. *For lo the Winter is paſt, the Rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the Earth, the time of the ſinging of Birds is come, and the voice of the Turtle is heard in our Land. The Fig-tree putteth forth her green Figs, and the Vines with the tender Grape give a good ſmell.* That ſolitary ſeaſon is now gone, wherein nothing but doubts and fears, and deſpondence, and accuſations, did overwhelm the ſoul; the floods that kept it under, are dried, and there is now a chearful and a pleaſant alteration: the Clouds are vaniſht, and the Sky is bright: and a new World and face of things does now appear: His return to his Ancient Mercies is like *Noah*'s entrance into the World after it had been cleanſed and waſhed by the Deluge. God's Favour makes our Tears to be as the gentle dew of Night, which with the warming kindly beams of the Sun, makes the Plants and Herbs, the Gardens and the Flowers, to look more freſh and green. When God departs, our weakneſs to what is good encreaſes; we have no power left, but the *joy of the Lord is our ſtrength*, Neh. 8. 10. This is like the return of health, and good digeſtion, to one that has been

long ſick; it cauſes a new ferment and motion in the blood, and makes all his actions to be accompanied with more life and vigor; men under ſtrange fears and amazement are incapable of ſervice; and when we are deſerted, ſo are we. When we apprehend our ſelves to be caſtaways, we offer *the bread of mourners*, if we offer at all; but none of our Sacrifices are with joy and gladneſs of heart. A man whoſe bones are broken, cannot go about his work; and when our ſpirits are wounded, if we work at all, we do but lamely ſet about it. We may halt a little, but we cannot *run the way of God's Commands*. Our ſorrows make us ſerious, and thoughtful, but 'tis joy that makes us active; 'tis the oyl of gladneſs that cauſes our wheels to move, and us to advance forward, as in the Chariots of *Aminadab*. One that is hungry or a thirſt, uſes but feeble endeavours, to what he does that is newly refreſht.

5. *This joy that comes in the Morning, after a Night of weeping, is very pleaſant to the Soul, as it is then delivered from the inſultings and triumphs of the Devil:* In that doleful Night, that evil ſpirit does continually terrifie and fright us; but when the morning comes, he that dreads the light flies away. Then it is in ſome meaſure with us, as it was with our Saviour in the Wilderneſs, *When the Devil left him, Angels came and miniſtred unto him.* Tho there is between him and us a vaſt diſparity; he conquered and was no way worſted by it; but we come bleeding from the field of Battel; our ſouls are defiled with

with his Temptations; and the hurts we receive in our Conflicts, do now and then pain us, and yield us remembrances of our ſin by their pain and ſmart, it may be, to our dying day: But however, it is a joy to us, to think that tho we were beſet on every ſide, yet we are eſcaped as a Bird out of the ſnare of the Fowler, *The ſnare is broken, and we are eſcaped*, Pſal. 124.7. God has brought our ſouls out of the deep Dungeon, and he that was our Gaoler had not power enough to keep us there; tho the deliverance that we have had, is ſo ſtrange, and ſo miraculous, that our going out is like that of *Peter*, Act. 12. 9. *He went out, and wiſt not that it was true which was done by the Angel, but thought he ſaw a Viſion.* It was wonderful to *Peter* that had looked for a ſudden Execution on the next day, to come to his praying-friends in ſafety; and ſo it is to us, who thought our ſelves a while ago doom'd to die. The Devil hath winnow'd us; and, Oh that we could ſay, That our chaff is gone! This Archer hath ſorely ſhot at us, but thanks be to God, he hath not obtained his deſign, which was our total ruin. We have been in a very fiery furnace. Oh that it were with us as with the three Children that came out, and were not hurt at all. We have been in a den of Lions, in a howling Wilderneſs, but we have not periſht there; it is a pleaſure to us that we have now ſomething to anſwer the great accuſer of the Brethren; that now we can by faith in our great Captain, ward off his blows, and quench his fiery darts.

6. *This joy that comes in the morning after deſertion, is from the propriety that we have in God, and in the Promiſes of the Goſpel*; as *David* ſays, *Pſal.* 42. ult. *He is the health of my countenance, and my God.* 'Tis pleaſant to know that God is good; but more pleaſant to us when we taſte his Goodneſs: When we can ſay with the Bleſſed Virgin, *Luk.* 1. 46, 47. *My ſoul doth magnifie the Lord, and my ſpirit hath rejoyced in God my Saviour, for he hath regarded the low eſtate of his handmaiden.* 'Tis pleaſant to hear of Chriſt, but more pleaſant by far, when we with old *Simeon* embrace him in our Arms; and ſay with the Church, *I am my beloved's, and he is mine.* Then the ſoul will be cheared with perpetual delight, ſaying, Having God, I have enough: *Enter into thy reſt, O my ſoul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* When it can reflect and think of him as its own portion, then the ſorrows and darkneſs of the Night are gone; for it has God, that is all *light*, *and with him is no darkneſs at all*; and to ſee the light, and to poſſeſs it, is the ſame thing. There is, as one obſerves, a reflected and a direct Light, I ſee Palaces, and Mountains, and Towns, and Fields, and Trees, with a reflected Light; and hence it is, that I ſee them without poſſeſſing them; but I ſee the light of the Sun, and of the Stars, by direct rays, and in ſeeing them I poſſeſs; for to rejoice in the light of the Sun, and to poſſeſs it, is the ſame thing. We now ſee God indeed by a reflected light, which comes to us from the Creatures; and hence it is that all thoſe that ſee him, do not poſſeſs him; but

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in Heaven God will be ſeen without Vails and Reflexions. His light will be a direct light, which will fill us throughout; it was a comfort to the Patriarchs and holy men of old, to have the hope of Chriſt's appearance; they ſaw his day afar off, and they rejoyced; but how much more is it to that ſoul that has actually ſeen him come, and not only ſpreading his beams to remove the general darkneſs of the world, but ſhining with a peculiar light and heat into its ſelf. It is peculiarity that endears the moſt of things to us; our own Friends, our own Relations, our own Joys, are the moſt pleaſant. It is not from Chriſt's being ſingly conſidered as a Mediator, that we derive this comfort; but from the reflexion that we are able to make of our happineſs in him; it is that which creates the ſweeteſt motions in our hearts. Before this propriety, there may be a calmneſs of ſpirit, and leſſer degrees of Complacency, expreſſing themſelves in love, and hope, and deſire; but 'tis the actual poſſeſſion of a good as our own, that is the Parent of a real joy; the Chriſtian may find ſome comfort in beholding the Incarnation, the Sufferings, and the Promiſe of his ſecond Coming; but when the ſoul can ſay, He died and roſe again for me; this touches it with a very lively ſatisfaction, and makes it ſay as in *Hab.* 3. 17.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the further Properties of the Joy that comes to a Soul after long deſertion. 'Tis Irreſiſtible, tho uſually Gradual; it revives the body and the natural ſpirits. It fills the late mourner with the hope of Glory, and cauſes him to expreſs his delight to others. From all which we may juſtly admire the Wiſdom of the Divine Providence.

7. *His Joy is Irreſiſtible.* As all the darkneſs of the Night cannot hinder the approach of the welcome day; ſo neither can all our doubts, nor our fears, nor all the horrors of the Night hinder the beams of God's favour, when he is pleaſed to ſhine upon us. *Job* 34. 29. *When he giveth quietneſs, who then can make trouble?* Notwithſtanding all the directions and the helps that our Miniſters, or our friends give us in our trouble, we refuſe to be comforted; but when he ſpeaks the word, we muſt obey. He *creates the fruit of the lips, peace, peace*; and we can no more reſiſt his Almighty power, than the firſt Chaos could withſtand his Command, when in the Language of a God he ſpoke, and ſaid, *Let there be Light.* Our eſcape from our Spiritual troubles bears ſome proportion with the Reſurrection of our Lord from the Dead; as that was owing not to a power ordinary, or created, ſo neither is ours; but to a power

power that is Cœleſtial and Divine. It was not, as *one obſerves, the effect of the Power of God in the ways of nature, ſuch as is the Riſing of the Sun, the Return of Seaſons, the Fruitfulneſs of the Earth; but the effect of a power altogether Infinite and Supernatural; it is not according to the uſual Laws of Nature, or the courſe of Ordinary Providence.

* *Claude Traite de Jeſus Chriſt* Liv. v. 12.

8. *This Joy is uſually Gradual, and not all at once*: I ſay uſually, for ſometimes perſons in great diſtreſs and agonies of ſoul, have been ſuddenly relieved in their darkeſt Night, and in the deepeſt Dungeon a great Light has ſhined upon them; ſo that thoſe that have one hour cried out, they were damned, and loſt; have the next triumphed in the hope of glory; and from the fear of Hell have come to a glorious view of Heaven to their own exceeding comfort, and the comfort of all that heard them. But tho God may do what he pleaſes, this is not his ordinary way; as the Night comes, and the Sun goes down by degrees, ſo does the morning come, and the Sun ariſe by the ſame degrees; as it rarely happens that any fall into great diſtreſs of Conſcience, on a ſudden, ſome leſſer afflictions make way for greater ſtrokes; ſo ſeldom are any comforted immediately, but their comfort comes like the break of day; there are ſome faint ſtreaks of light, ſome little ſupports, and quiet hopes before the Sun ariſe. And God in this accommodates himſelf to the weakneſs of our nature; for a ſudden paſſage from a great Affliction to a great Joy, is a thing which our tender nature is hardly capable to bear; and uſually the Conſciences of thoſe

that have been very long terrified and afflicted, begin to be calm; as the humours of the body, that have been diſordered, return to their Ancient courſe; for ſo long as the Spirits and the Blood are diſordered, ſo long the Soul will unavoidably be in ſome unpleaſant agitation.

9. *This joy has a pleaſant influence on the Body, and revives that, with the reviving mind*; they fall ſick and droop, and they recover and rejoyce together. When God is our God, it cauſes health in our Countenances, as well as pleaſure in our Hearts; and though I know that abundance of poor people, that have been long amazed with the fear of God's Wrath, have very feeble, ſickly Bodies to the day of death; yet this calmneſs and peace of mind does greatly mitigate their pains, and pour Honey and Sweetneſs into the moſt bitter Cup: For what is it that makes affliction, in trouble of mind, to be ſo intollerable, but that the afflicted perſon looks upon it as the beginning of ſorrows, as a few drops before a more dreadful ſtorm, and as the introduction to hell and woe? But when the ſting of guilt is removed, and ſin is pardoned, the yoak ſits very eaſie on their ſhoulders, that uſed to gall them before. Prov. 15. 13. *A merry heart maketh a chearful countenance.* Joy as well as grief, cannot be diſſembled, if it be real and very ſtrong. Joy in the Heart, is like the Rain at the Root of the Graſs, it will, after being moiſtned to the bottom, appear much more green and flouriſhing. Prov. 17. 22. *A merry heart doth good like a medicine.* Even that chearfulneſs which ariſes from natural and ordinary Cauſes, is very healthful, and adds very

ry much to the ſtrength and vigour of the body; much more then will that joy promote it, which is founded on the Word of God, and on the hope of his Acceptance. And no queſtion *David* had a reſpect to this, when he ſaid, Pſal. 51. 8. *Make me to hear joy and gladneſs, that the bones which thou haſt broken may rejoyce.* Pſ. 35. 10. *All my bones ſhall ſay, Lord, who is like to thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too ſtrong for him; and the needy from him that ſpoileth him!* No troubles waſt our natural ſpirits more than our inward griefs and fears; no joys refreſh and make them more ſprightly than the joys of our Souls. See *Job* 33. 19, to 26. *God is gracious unto him, and ſaith, Deliver him from going down into the pit. I have found a ranſome, his fleſh ſhall be freſher than a childs, he ſhall return to the days of his youth, he ſhall pray unto God, and he will be favourable to him, and he ſhall ſee his face with joy.* Thoſe that have writ of Long Life, and the means to obtain it, adviſe us to keep our minds always full of ſplendid and illuſtrious objects, of Hiſtories, and the contemplations of Nature, and the like; but *the beſt Medicine is a quiet Conſcience:* And tho all our Religion will not, indeed, ſave us from ſickneſs, yet it will enable us to bear it; not to be too much concerned and overwhelmed with the manifold and unavoidable Calamities of this mortal Life. This is Joy, indeed, that will recreate our ſouls and our bodies too; that will prepare the one for its paſſage to Glory, and the other for its lying in the Grave. Thus our ſoul, which is our glory, ſhall rejoyce, and our fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in hope, *Pſal.* 16. 9. and both at length, as

they

they have mourn'd, ſo rejoyce together, and that for evermore: For when God is pleaſed to ſpeak, and to help us both in our bodies and our ſouls, 'tis *multiplied Salvation*, and many thouſand Cures in one.

The *third General* is, *That Joy ariſes from the hope of ſome future Good*; and this good muſt be both *very agreeable to the ſoul, and very certain:* For if it be not ſo, there cannot be any other than a weak and a trembling joy. There is a great pleaſure in expectation of what is to come, if it be great, and laſting, and attainable; now to one that hath the returning-ſenſe of God's favour, 'tis very pleaſant to look for that hour or day, or rather for that *chearful Eternity*, when he ſhall have the ſame reviving ſmiles of his heavenly Father in a more bright and conſpicuous manner; when not only the night of weeping is gone, but that morning is come which ſhall *ſhine more and more to a perfect day.* And thus will the comfortable perſon ſay, If the taſt that I have now of God be ſo ſweet, Oh! what will the full enjoyment of him be! If in this ſtrange Land, I am entertained, as with the Bread of Angels, What Feaſts will refreſh me when I am at home! when I am paſt the Storms, and beyond the Grave, and Sin and Tears ſhall give me no further moleſtation! The firſt Fruits make them to long for the full Harveſt; thus ſays the Apoſtle, *We rejoyce in hope of the glory of God*; and this made the Church to ſay, *Make haſt, O my beloved, and be thou like a Roe, or a young Hart upon the mountains of ſpices.* Expectation of any main event (as one ſays) is a great advantage to a wiſe heart. If the fiery

Chariot

Chariot had fetcht away *Elias* unlookt for, we ſhould have doubted of the favour of his Tranſportation.

4. *This Morning-Joy will expreſs it ſelf. As our griefs cauſe us to groan and ſigh, ſo does this make us in an open pleaſant way, to manifeſt our gladneſs.* The reviving ſenſe of God's favour, does ſo fill our hearts, that we cannot, without diſhonour to him, and prejudice to our ſelves, conceal, or ſtifle it. When we apprehend our ſelves to be happy, we take a peculiar pleaſure in communicating to others the notice of that happineſs; and are much more pleaſed by ſuch a communication. This Joy is always attended with an expreſſion of the Mercies of our Deliverer, that we cannot but ſay to our Brethren, *Come and behold what God has wrought for us!* Behold what Salvation his own Arm and Power has accompliſhed! ſo *Pſal.* 51. 12. *Reſtore to me the joy of thy ſalvation, and uphold me with thy free ſpirit; then will I teach tranſgreſſors, and ſinners ſhall be converted unto thee.* Then I ſhall be able to tell them, That thy ways, however rugged they ſeem to be for a while, yet are at length even and pleaſant ways; That they lead to Life and Happineſs; and beholding the beams of thy Love, that make me ſo pleaſant and ſo chearful, they ſhall by ſuch a ſight, be incouraged alſo to Religion. And to the ſame purpoſe, *Pſal.* 16. 9. *My heart is glad, and my glory rejoyceth:* His inward Joy was not able to contain it ſelf. We teſtify our pleaſure on lower occaſions, even at the gratification of our ſenſes; when our Ear is filled with harmonious melody; when our Eye is fixed upon admirable and beauteous objects;

jects; when our Smell is recreated with agreeable odours; and our taſt is ſo, by the delicacy and rareneſs of Proviſions; and much more will our ſoul ſhew its delight, when its faculties that are of a more exquiſite conſtitution, meet with things that are in all reſpects agreeable and pleaſant to them; and in God they meet with all thoſe: with his Light our Underſtanding is refreſh'd, and ſo is our Will, with his Goodneſs and his Love. So in *Pſal.*126.1,2. *When the Lord turn'd again the captivity of Sion, then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with ſinging.* It was a ſign their hearts were very full of joy, ſeeing the mouth and the tongue poured it out in ſo great abundance; nay, their Neighbours could not but take notice of it, *They ſaid among the heathen, the Lord hath done great things for them*, far beyond the methods of an ordinary Providence. Their Liberty was ſtrange and miraculous, that ſurpaſſed all Imaginable Reaſons; and, behold, as people take delight to go over and over again with a pleaſant thing, they Eccho to this ſaying of the Heathens, ſaying, *Verſe* 3. *The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.* Others knew it only by report, that God had been ſo good to them; but they by ſweet experience. In the delivered people, it was, indeed, an inward Jubilation, with a loud Cry, and Song of Triumph; as when God is withdrawn, we are forced to ſpeak in the anguiſh and bitterneſs of our Souls; ſo when he returns, the return is ſo pleaſant, that we cannot hold our tongues. In our troubles there is a latent grief, ſo ſinking and ſo very ſad, that no words

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can expreſs; ſo in the good hope of God's acceptance, there is a ſweetneſs that cannot be declared; *Ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. We dare not give a particular relation of our grievous ſufferings, leſt we ſhould diſcourage many poor people, that are apt enough of themſelves to ſink and be diſcouraged: or if we would, we cannot, they are ſo very terrible. So the ſight of God, after long darkneſs, fills us with wonder, and with pleaſing aſtoniſhment; we feel we are delighted, but we cannot fully tell what it is to be ſo; and ſometimes we are in ſuch tranſporting joys, that like the bleſſed Apoſtle, when he had the view of Paradiſe, whether we are in the Body or out of it, we ſcarcely know; The poor ſoul is ſo tranſported, that it is every way ſurrounded with delight. Will God dwell in ſuch an heart as mine, that has been ſo full of murmurings, and ſo full of unbelief! Will he pardon and accept of me! Shall I that was doomed to dye, in my own ſad thoughts, have the hope of glory! and inſtead of my ſlaviſh fears from the dread of Hell, have the ſight of Heaven! Shall I be his Favourite, of whom I had ſuch hard and unbecoming thoughts! Oh! what Grace is this! how unlook'd for! how undeſerved! and yet how ſuitable! *Is this the manner of men, O Lord God!* Is this thy kind uſage of a poor ſinner, and of ſo great a ſinner as I have been! This is Grace indeed! this is all *free Love and Mercy*! How can this be paſt over in ſilence? Such a perſon eſcaped after ſuch apprehenſions of ſo near a danger, is like the Lame Man that was healed, *He leaping up, ſtood*

ſtood and walked, and entred into the Temple, walking, and leaping, and praiſing God. And all the people ſaw him walking and praiſing God, Acts 3. 8, 9. *and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which happened unto him.* As inward anguiſh cauſes the diſtreſſed many times to roar out vehemently; ſo heavy is the load that preſſes them, on the contrary, when the fear of Wrath is removed, they rejoyce with ſhouting, and with a loud voice, like thoſe that Conquer, or reap the Harveſt: For as when a Man is under inward anguiſh and tribulation, he looks upon himſelf as a Beacon fired on a Hill, to give warning to others, and to ſhew them the danger of Sin; ſo when he comes to peace and hope again, he wiſhes that he might be placed as on a Mountain, and enabled to trumpet out to all the World *the Riches of the Grace of God*; that as none may preſume when they ſee his miſery, ſo none may deſpair when they ſee his ſafety, and his eſcape from that miſery.

Inf. 1. *The Wiſdom and the Beauty of the Divine Providence.* That as in the World there is a comfortable Succeſſion of Night and Day, ſo in his Servants mourning, after the Sorrows of the Night, the Joy of the morning comes; this Night comes, and this morning dawns when it is moſt proper for it ſo to do. *He hath made every thing beautiful in his time*, Eccl. 3. 11. The Storms, and Rain, and Cold of Winter, are as beneficial to the Univerſe, as the Summers heat. Tho we from our Self-love, judge of God, either with more admiring, or leſs becoming Thoughts, as he deals well or ill with us; but it is not particular Churches, nor particu-

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lar Persons that God only regards, but his whole Creation; his Providences to us contribute to the good of that. We know not to what uses God will put us; but it ought something to support us to think in what state soever we are, we are serving his Design; how pressing, and how violent soever our Dangers and Tribulations are, he can save us even by methods contrary to those which our Reason apprehends; by throwing us down, he can make us to be more established; and by seeming to destroy us, promote our welfare; he can make unlikely things to advance his purpose. 'Tis many times more dark just before the break of day; and the going back of the Sun on the Dial of *Ahaz*, was to be a sign of *Hezekiah*'s longer Life, *Isaiah* 38. 8. Therefore (if you will allow me a small digression) 'tis a very evil thing for men to censure the Providence of God, because of the present Miseries that he suffers his Servants to be afflicted with; there are many that think it a piece of Zealous Loyalty not to blame their Superiors for the higher Matters of Government, which are above their reach, and yet dare to Arraign at their Bar the Supreme Ruler of the World; if what he does be not according to the Model of their Fancies, or suitable to their Imaginations; or because, whilest others are gratified, their Humours are croft and disappointed; not considering that the difference and variety of Circumstances amongst particular Men are necessary to the general and publick Good. To censure God, and to reflect upon his Conduct, is as if a Country Clown who never travelled beyond the Smoak of his own Cottage, should condemn

condemn the Proclamation of a King, or the Votes of a Parliament, when he does not know the great Reasons of State that these Actions depend upon. But as St. *Basil* observes, When Men are first crossed in their Worldly Affairs, they begin for want of Patience to doubt, whether God in very deed regardeth the things of this World, whether he take notice of particular Men; when they see no end of their Miseries, but one evil continually is attended with another, they are blasphemously apt to think there is no God. God can bring Affliction to try and manifest the Graces of his People; as the Stars, that are a chief part of the Glory of the World, are then most illustrious and visible when the day is gone; and then he makes the Sun to rise again, that displays new Objects to us. The Rods of God are many times very sharp, but at last we shall find that they were dipt in Honey, and managed with Love. The Conduct of Providence is always Wise and Good, but very often Mysterious and Unfathomable, and in nothing more so, then in his bringing abundance of his Servants to Heaven by the very Gates of Hell; and in suffering Satan to buffet and to vex them, that they may triumph over him in the latter end. He makes them to be in great perplexities, that the sweet wonders of his deliverance may the more appear. *We went through fire and through water; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place*, Psal. 66. 12. Thus he preserved *Moses* in a Cradle of Bullrushes, and would not suffer *the great Infant* to perish, though he was in manifest danger, either to be carried away by the force of the water,

Water, or to be devoured by *Crocodiles*, with which that River did abound. So was *Noah* preſerved in the Ark, not by any Art in Navigation, but by the Government and Conduct of God himſelf. He haſtens deliverance many times, when it ſeems to be at the remoteſt diſtance; *In the Evening it ſhall be light*, in a ſeaſon when it was not to be expected. In all his works of Nature and of Grace, he makes things, that having a ſeeming contrariety to what he deſigns, to further his deſign. Thus (ſome obſerve) the Earth hangs upon nothing in the midſt of the fluid Air, though it be the moſt heavy of all the Elements; he renders it fruitful for the Production of all neceſſary things, though it be of it ſelf cold and dry; and ſo the Sea, which by its ſcituation is above the Earth, and does ſeem to threaten it with new deluges, yet is kept in its own Channels; for after it has been raiſed even to the Clouds in threatning Waves, its fury dies again into a Calm, and obſerves the bounds that God has ſet it: Thus our Lord Jeſus alſo works; By being Tempted, he Conquer'd the Tempter; and by Dying, he ſubdued Death; and ſo at the ſending of the Spirit, firſt the Houſe ſhook and trembled, and then it was filled with the Glory of the Lord: Firſt, deep Sorrows, and then as mighty Joys. Firſt, *John*, Rev. 14. 2. *heard a voice as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder, and then the voice of harpers harping with their harps, and that ſang a new ſong before the throne.* A due conſideration of the Providences of God will keep us from the abſurd Opinion of the Heathens, That the Deity envied

the felicity of Men, and that he who was most prosperous, was near to a sudden overthrow: And even the Learned Men among them were so apprehensive of it, that they durst not acknowledg their own, tho but ordinary welfare, without an excuse. See instances of this, in Dr. *Casaubon's Original Cause of Temporal Evils.* Upon this account *Augustus*, in whose days the Saviour of the World was born, once in the year turned Beggar, and received Alms of such of the Common people as would give him; He mistrusted his own felicity, and dreaded that, so frightful in those days, *Invidiam Numinis.* The Heathens had but parcels of the Scripture, and those too by Tradition much adulterated; no wonder if they made a contrary use of it; and by sad experience, finding the effects of *Adam's* Fall, and God's Curse, and not well informed of all particulars, the Devil also being busie with them, as he was with *Eve*, to promote a misapprehension of God, as if he were envious[a]; whereas upon due consideration, what in the Judgment of blind and corrupt nature seemed envy and malignity, will appear Mercy, being used by God as a profitable Medicine, or Antidote against the greatest and most dangerous infection of the Soul; for crosses and afflictions in this World, are not effects of envy in the supreme dispenser of all things; but Arguments of his Goodness and Providence. *All things shall work together for good to them that love God*, Rom. 8. 28. Sickness and Health, Poverty and Riches, Anguish, and Fear, and Horror, shall contribute to their Salvation; and in the most fiery Furnaces, and the most painful Troubles, they shall find the refreshments of

[a] See Dr. *Casaubon*, p. 27.

of his Grace. His Providences work together; they are in Concert, and are not to be taken apart, like a Compoſition of divers Ingredients; for there are ſome that, if taken alone, might kill the patient; but when they are joyned with others, which by their contrary qualities temper their exceſs, they do marvellous things, being counterpoized †: God many times lets our darkneſs ſtay long, that we may know what a pleaſant thing it is to ſee the light.

† *Fragments de Morus*, p. 62.

CHAP. IX.

Of the different ends that God hath in the Afflictions of the Good and the Wicked; and what Reaſon we have to be reconciled to his Providence: And that we muſt be ſatisfied that God carries us to Heaven in his own Way and Method.

Inf. 2. *THis ſhews us the different ends that God has in the afflictions of the Good and of the Wicked:* To the one *they* are Medicinal, to the other Penal; to the one in Love, to the other in Wrath; to the one, the ſhadows of an Eternal night; and to the other the forerunners of the morning. Often his people are thrown down by their Fears, by Satan, and the World; but as often may they ſay, *Rejoyce not againſt me, O my enemy* &c. They may be dejected, but they may ſay with *David*, *O my ſoul, hope ſtill on God*, &c. Afflictions (as one ſays) are common to the good and bad, as the entrance into the bottom of the Sea was to the *Iſraelites* and to the *Egyptians*; but the *Iſraelites* conducted by a Cloud and a Pillar of Fire, were

inlightned, and aſſured, and paſſed in ſafety, and came out praiſing God; but to the *Egyptians*, this Cloud that ſeparated them was full of darkneſs, and they were drowned in the Waves, whileſt the others ſtood upon the dry Land; ſo God comforts his people by the light of his Word, and the ſupport of hope from his holy Promiſes; whereas the wicked are finally ſwallowed up of ſadneſs and deſpair. The Righteous fall, and they riſe again; but the feet of the Wicked ſtumble on the dark Mountains, and never riſe again: Tho, indeed, as the ſame perſon obſerves *, Even as the *Chaldeans* formerly meaſured their natural day differently from the *Iſraelites*, they put the day firſt, and the night after; but the *Iſraelites* on the contrary, according to the order that was obſerved in the Creation; for in the beginning darkneſs was upon the face of the deep, and of every one of the ſix days it is ſaid, *The evening and the morning made the firſt day.* So the times of the World, and of the Church, are differently diſpoſed; for the World begins hers by the day of temporal proſperity, and finiſhes it by a night of darkneſs and anguiſh that is Eternal; but the Church, on the contrary, begins hers by the night of Adverſity, which ſhe ſuffers for a while, and ends them by a day of Conſolation which ſhe ſhall have for ever. The Prophet in this *Pſalm*, begins with the Anger of God, but ends with his Favour; as of old, when they entred into the Tabernacle, they did at firſt ſee unpleaſant things, as the Knives of the Sacrificers, the Blood of Victims, the Fire that burn'd upon the Altar, which conſumed the Offerings; but when they paſſed a little further, there was the Holy Place, the Candleſtick of Gold, the Shew-bread,

* *Faucheur* Sermons, firſt part, p. 132.

bread, and the Altar of Gold, on which they offered Perfumes; and in fine, there was the Holy of Holies, and the Ark of the Covenant, and the Mercy-Seat, and the Cherubims, which was called the Face of God *.

* *Muſſard.* Sermons ſur divers Texts, p. 30.

Inf. 3. *This may then reconcile you to his Providence.* The night of trouble makes you not to ſee the Beauty of the Church; but tho ſhe is black, ſhe is comely ſtill; he that makes his *Sun to ſhine upon the unthankful and the Evil*, will not always cover himſelf with Clouds from his own People: His common care has provided for the pleaſure of his Creatures, fruit to delight their Taſts, and Flowers, and various Colours, their Eyes, and their ſmell; Rivers, and Trees, and Meadows, and Groves, and all the variety of Nature, to recreate and entertain them; and if all this Accommodation be made for Rebels, he will not fail to entertain his Subjects with joys of a better kind. *Joy is ſown for the Righteous*, and it will ariſe in the time of Harveſt, and that time will ſhortly come. If God have done ſo much to gratify the ſenſes of his Creatures with ſuitable ſatisfactions, the Souls of his People that are more Noble, ſhall not be diſappointed of ſuch as are Cœleſtial and Divine; for joy is that which with a ſweet violence does attract the heart of Man; God regards the diſtreſſed, and has a peculiar pity for thoſe that are in the greateſt trouble *; as Mothers tend, with a peculiar care, the weakeſt Child. The World, indeed, admires, flatters, waits upon thoſe on whom the Sun ſhines, and who are in a proſperous condition; as Rivers run into the Sea where there is no need of Water, ſo it heaps its friendſhips and kindneſſes on thoſe that leaſt need them, and forſakes the diſgraced,

† *Manton* Serm. on 2 Theſ. 2. 17. p. 432.

the poor, and thoſe that are in want; but God, when his Servants are in the greateſt troubles, encourages them by his Name which is *The Father of Mercies, and the God of all Conſolations*; he is moſt mindful of them, and viſits them moſt, and gives them moſt of his comfortable preſence, when they are moſt afflicted, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4. *He comforteth us in all our tribulations.* He will not give them a conſtant eaſe, they ſhall not be excuſed from the common inconveniencies of the Fall from ſickneſs, or from death, but himſelf is willing to be their own portion; he is, in all, their own God: They ſhall labour, but they ſhall have reſt; they ſhall fight, but he will Crown their heads with Victory; *they ſhall ſow in tears, but reap in joy.* The Waves and the Floods that now overwhelm them, ſhall be turned into Rivers of pleaſure for evermore.

The Uſe of Exhortation is in theſe following Particulars.

1. Be very well ſatisfied that God carry you to Heaven in the way that he thinks moſt proper; It were indeed a thing very deſirable to be at eaſe, to travel with his light about us; but if we muſt go through darkneſs, and danger, and calamity, to Heaven, let us be ſatisfied that his will is done, tho we go weeping and groaning thither. You'l think, perhaps, that he deſerves not the name of a Chriſtian, that will not ſuffer God to guide him any way, ſo it be to Salvation; but alas, how few are there, that are ſatisfied with his methods! when his Candle ſhines upon our Tabernacle, we are well enough pleaſed; but when he begins to correct and chaſten us for a long ſeaſon, then we murmur and repine; and when we

we meet with difficulties and tears, and troubles one upon another, then we think he is an hard Maſter: this is our common caſe, and our common folly. We can all make the Prayer of *Jabez*, 1 Chron. 4. 10. *Oh that thou wouldſt bleſs me indeed, and inlarge my coaſt, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldſt keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me:* But how few can ſay heartily with our Bleſſed Lord, *If the Cup muſt not paſs, thy will be done?* He could bring you to Heaven without a tear or a ſigh; but if not, who can reſiſt his order, or blame his Providence? He led the Children of *Iſrael* forty years wandring to and fro in a great and *a terrible Wilderneſs, wherein were fiery Serpents, and Scorpions, and drought, and no water*, Deut. 8. 15. when he could have led them quickly to the Land of *Canaan*. You muſt not think to come to Heaven without many a ſad heart, and many weeping eyes; through the vally of *Bacha* muſt you travel to the Mount of God. The Ark that had a *Noah* in it, did not immediately reſt; it was not in one day that the great waters did abate, or fall into their old Channels; your paſſage to glory may be ſafe, tho it be very troubleſome; and the rods that ſeem to be the moſt painful, may be moſt neceſſary to you; for tho the *Iſraelites* met with various troubles, yet *Pſal.* 107. 7. *He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a City of habitation.* It may be you ſhall be ſhipwrackt into the Haven; and tho you be *ſaved, yet it ſhall be ſo as by fire.* Through many a ſharp Croſs, and many a bitter Tribulation, and in the fire, your Comforts and your Eaſe may ſuffer loſs for a time, but it

ſhall be made up again: Afflictions ruin none that belong to God; and many a Chriſtian ſhall ſay at laſt, *I had periſhed, if I had not periſhed. I had been undone for ever, if I had not been afflicted.* Out of the ruins of the fleſh, God raiſes the glorious ſtructure of the new Creature; and from the deſtruction of our Earthly comforts, he cauſes Heavenly joys to ſpring; let us not find fault with God's Providence, for it will turn *our water into wine*; our tears of grief, into the moſt pleaſant joys: And as at the Marriage of *Cana*, we ſhall have the beſt at laſt. Our Afflictions will encreaſe our Grace, and we ſhall ere long mount up from the Wilderneſs of this world, fraught *with Myrrh and Frankincenſe, and all the ſpices of the Merchants.* Let us not find fault if we meet with the waters of *Marah* in our Journey to the Land of Promiſe*. Thirſt and bitterneſs is the portion of Pilgrims, 'Tis enough for us that we ſhall have reſt at laſt, tho we muſt not expect that the Providence of God ſhould go out of its ordinary courſe for us. Let us confide in his Goodneſs, his Faithfulneſs, and Loving-kindneſs, his Word and Promiſe, this is the quiet harbour into which we muſt put our trembling ſouls; theſe are the Conſolations that will make our bitter waters ſweet. Submit therefore to God, to him pour out your hearts, tho you be long afflicted, and with one wave upon another.

* *Hall* on the Marriage in *Cana*, p. 162.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The Concluſion of the whole Treatiſe. With directions to ſuch who have been formerly in the darkneſs of a ſorrowful Night, and now enjoy the light of day.

2. LEt us, with whom it was once Night, improve that Morning-joy that now ſhines upon us, and that briefly in theſe particulars.

1. *Let us be continual admirers of God's Grace and mercy to us:* He has prevented us with his Goodneſs, when he ſaw nothing in us but impatience and unbelief; when we were like *Jonas* in *the belly of Hell*, his Bowels earned over us, and his Power brought us ſafe to Land. What did we to haſten his deliverance, or to obtain his mercy? If he had never come to our relief, till he ſaw ſomething in us to invite him, we had not yet been relieved. No more did we contribute to our Reſtoration, then we do to the riſing of the Sun, or the approach of day: We were like thoſe dry bones without motion, and without ſtrength, *Ezek.* 37. 1. And we alſo ſaid, *That we were cut off for our parts, and our hope was gone, and he cauſed breath to enter into us, and we live.* Who is a God like to our God, that pardoneth iniquity, tranſgreſſion, and ſin? that retains not his anger for ever? that is ſlow to wrath, and delights in mercy? That has been diſpleaſed with us for a moment, but gives us hope of his Everlaſting kindneſs? Oh! what love is due from us to Chriſt, that has pleaded for us when we our ſelves had nothing to ſay! that has brought us out of a den of Lions, and from the Jaws of the Roaring Lion!

To

To ſay as Mrs. *Sarah Wight* did *, *I have obtained mercy, that thought my time of mercy paſt for ever. I have hope of heaven, that thought I was already damned by unbelief. I ſaid many a time, there is no hope in thine end, and I thought I ſaw it. I was ſo deſperate, I cared not what became of me: Oft was I at the very brink of death and hell, even at the very Gates of both, and then Chriſt ſhut them. I was as Daniel in the Lions Den, and he ſtopt the mouth of thoſe Lions, and delivered me. The Goodneſs of God is unſearchable; how great is the excellency of his Majeſty, that yet he would look upon ſuch an one as I! that he has given me peace that was full of terror, and walked continually as amidſt fire and brimſtone!*

* See her Life written by Mr. *Jeſſe*, pag. 40.

2. *Let us walk humbly, and be full of cautious fear, that we offend not a God that is ſo terrible, and that we grieve not a Benefactor that is ſo good.* Let *us walk ſoftly all our days*, remembring there was but a ſtep between us and Hell. Oh! let us put our mouths in the duſt, let us lothe and abhor our ſelves for the manifold iniquities that we were guilty of during the darkneſs of the Night; and now the Morning is come, and ſuch a Morning as we never hoped to ſee, let us *walk as children of the day*; that ſo being come out of the Furnace, we may be as Gold that is refined.

3. *Tho we do rejoice, yet we muſt rejoice with trembling*; with trembling, leſt another Night ſo black, ſo frightful, and ſo diſmal come upon us. Let our obedience be more lively, and *as the tender graſs ſpringing out of the Earth by clear ſhining after rain*; but let us remember, that our joy is not yet perfect, tho it be as the light of the Morning when the Sun riſeth; *It is not a Morning without clouds*, 2 *Sam.* 23. 4. The Sun will be Clouded with ma-

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ny Fogs and Miſts, for 'tis but yet a Morning-Sun, it will ſhine with greater glory in its height, when the Noon-day, and our compleat Salvation comes. The Devil that has tempted us will aſſault us again; Let us *watch*, that his deſigns may not take effect; for it may be he has but left us for a ſeaſon; alas! our unbelief and our other ſins, are not yet wholly dead. Let us rejoice that the Face of God now ſhines on us; but let us tremble to think what would become of us, ſhould it be hid again. Let us rejoice that we have good hope through grace; but let us tremble, leſt *deſpair, and the pains of Hell* ſhould again take hold upon us. The fear that we have of future ſuffering, does ſomewhat now diminiſh the brightneſs of our joy; tho we ought not to live under the perpetual bondage of ſuch fears, but truſt in God, and hope that he will *be our guide even unto death*. We are brought indeed out of *the miry pit, and the deep clay*; yet we cannot but tremble at our foregoing miſery. We are like a Perſon, that after a Shipwreck, has with great difficulty upon a Plank got ſafe to Land, he finds himſelf in a place aſſured, and rejoyces in it; nevertheleſs the noiſe of the Waves, and the great agitation that he was ſo lately in, makes him tremble: He remains a good while aſtoniſhed at his former danger, and his preſent ſafety. Let us not have a trembling of diſtruſt, but of vigilance, and of holy care; not to doubt of the Promiſes of God, but to keep down our own pride, and carnal ſecurity. Let us pray, that as he has *ſet our feet upon a rock*, ſo he *would eſtabliſh our goings*: remembring how low we have fallen, into what depths, and under what Calamities, we have conſtant cauſe to be afraid

fraid. *Pſ.*149.6. *Let the high praiſes of God be in our mouths, and a two-edged Sword in our hands*; Let us be as thoſe Soldiers, who tho they have newly gotten the victory over their Enemies, and rejoice for it; yet amidſt all their Acclamations ſtand upon their guard, leſt the remainder of thoſe that are unſubdued, ſhould rally their ſcattered Forces, and attacque them again to their diſadvantage.

3. *We muſt be very active in the ſervice of our good God.* We muſt begin to travel whilſt the morning laſts, and whilſt we have day before us.

4. *Our mouths muſt be full of praiſe to him that has delivered us.* Shall we not praiſe him, to whom we vowed praiſes when we were in trouble? Shall we not praiſe him, who alone has wrought ſalvation for us? *none but he could help us*, and he has done it. Magnificently has he delivered us, far above all our hopes. Oh, how much more pleaſant is it to you, and me, to call him *Father*, than to fear him as a Judge! How much more pleaſant to celebrate his praiſes, than to mourn for his departure; to tune our Harps after our Captivity, than to have them hanging on the Willows! Oh, Let us praiſe him, for he deſerves our praiſe; Let us praiſe him, for he hath remembred us in our low eſtate: Let us praiſe him, for his Terrors, his Rebukes, and his Frowns are gone; *Pſal.*116.1,2. &c. *Pſal.*37.6. The Lightning and Thunder, the horror and the darkneſs of the tempeſtuous night is over, and a chearful and a calm day now revives us. Let us praiſe him, for he is infinitely excellent; Let us praiſe him, for he expects our praiſe. So *David*, Pſal.116 1,2,3,5. *I love the Lord, becauſe he hath heard my voice, and my ſupplications, becauſe he hath inclined his ear to me,*

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therefore will I call upon him as long as I live; the ſorrows of death compaſſed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me, I found trouble and ſorrow. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous, yea our God is merciful. And *Pſ.*27.6. *Now ſhall mine head be lifted up above mine enemines round about me: Therefore will I offer in his Tabernacle ſacrifices of joy; I will ſing, yea, I will ſing praiſes unto the Lord.* Did we ever hope to ſee the Light of God again? Did we ever hope to think of Heaven as our own portion, and of Chriſt as our own Saviour? Did we ever hope that we ſhould be thus at eaſe, and thus joyful as we now are? *God is our helper, God is our refuge, and our ſtrong hold; and bleſſed be the name of the Lord.*

5. Let us call upon our Brethren, and our Friends, to help us to praiſe the Lord; *Pſal.*145. 2,3,8,9,14. as to my ſelf I make theſe requeſts; *Bleſs the Lord, O houſe of Aaron and Levi:* Bleſs him ye *Miniſters of the Goſpel* that prayed for me in my trouble, and have had your prayers granted: Bleſs the Lord, *O Houſe of Iſrael*, and all ye people every-where that ſympathized, and alſo kindly remembred me in my deſolate condition: Bleſs him *ye Old men*, that you have got ſo far towards the haven, without being thrown into the waves, and ſo much endangered by the Rocks as I have been. Bleſs him, that you have not met with ſuch violent tentations, and great ſorrows as I have met withal, though I ſet out long after you. Bleſs the Lord *ye Young men*, that you have not been weakned in the way with ſore affliction, and with the terrors of the Lord, which I long groaned under. Bleſs him every one *both ſmall and great*, againſt whom he does not proceed in ſuch ſmart and ſevere Providences, and in ſuch

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long and ſharp Afflictions. Bleſs him, that you ſee before your eyes, and to help your faith, *a perſon lately brought from the borders of the Grave, and Hell*; one for whom you were concerned, and for whom you prayed, and *one that ſtill needs, and beg your prayers*, that he may never come to ſuch a ſad and doleful night again. It is a common Cuſtom to *congratulate our Friends* recovery from ſickneſs, or when they return from ſome Foreign Land; but nothing does more deſerve our common thanks, than when a Perſon is come from under the ſenſe of God's diſpleaſure, to a ſenſe of his favour and love again. Thus it was with *Job*, ch.42.11. *Then came there to him all his brethren, and all his ſiſters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his houſe; and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him*: And with a deſign of exciting others to praiſe God with him, is that, *Pſal.66. 16. Come and hear all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my ſoul*. Or as the Father of the Prodigal to his obedient Son, that repined at the kind uſage that he gave to him that was leſs dutiful, upon his returning home; *Luke* 15.32. *It was meet that we ſhould make merry, and be glad, for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was loſt, and is found.* It is the deſign of God that the great and eminent Deliverances which he gives to ſome of his Servants, ſhould be taken notice of by all the reſt; that as they uſually bring along with them a common Benefit, ſo he ſhould have a common return of praiſe; *Pſ.66. 8. O bleſs our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praiſe to be heard, which holdeth our ſoul in life, and ſuf-*

ſuffereth not our feet to be moved. And the joining with others that have been in great diſtreſs, and are eſcaped, is to anſwer the Obligation we are under to that Precept, *To rejoice with them that do rejoice.* And an encouragement to thoſe who are yet in trouble, *Pſ.* 130.7. *Let Iſrael hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him there is plenteous redemption.* And to thoſe that yet are at eaſe, we may ſay as *Paul* to *Fœlix*, that we wiſh they were ſuch as we, in ſome reſpects, that is, excepting our bonds, our anguiſh and tribulation; that they alſo had ſuch experiences of the goodneſs, and the mercy of God.

6. *Let us always wait and hope for that eternal Felicity, which will at length dawn upon all his people, in the great morning of the Reſurrection*; and at their entrance into Heaven there will be joy indeed. *There is no night there*; 'tis a place that is continually bleſt with a bright and ſhining day. It is true (as one ſays) that as in nature the nights are not equal, thoſe of the Winter are much longer than thoſe of the Summer; but how long ſoever they be, they are always followed with the light of day; ſo whatſoever diverſity there is among the Afflictions of the faithful, to one they are much longer than to another; yet they ſhall have an end; as *Jacob* wraſtled all night, but in the morning got the victory. I confeſs that Sinners in this World have their pleaſures, but ſo beſet with thorns, ſo attended with fears and pains, ſo ſhort, and ſo vaniſhing, that they deſerve not the name. But in Heaven the Sun that riſes in the morning of our new Glory, will never ſet again; thoſe pleaſures are not like thoſe of Sin, for a ſeaſon, but for evermore. There our now imperfect Joy will be compleat and full. It will be ſatisfying and eternal too. We ſhall feel the love of God in ſo ſweet and tranſporting a manner, that we ſhall never doubt whether he loves us or not. We ſhall *always behold our Father's face*, he will look on us with delight, and we ſhall look on him with praiſe and joy. This world, becauſe of its lowneſs, is

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ſubject to Inundations and Miſeries, and innumerable Viciſſitudes of Pain and Grief; but that high and glorious World is the place of Triumph, and of Victory; then we ſhall ſee our *Sin* that made us weep, to be it ſelf totally defeated; then we ſhall ſee that *Devil* that tempted us, to be *trod under our feet*, and never to be able to tempt us any more. Let us often remember that ſaying of our Lord, John 16.21,22. *A woman, when ſhe is in travel, hath ſorrow, becauſe her hour is come: but as ſoon as ſhe is delivered of the Child, ſhe remembreth no more the anguiſh, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have ſorrow: but I will ſee you again, and your heart ſhall rejoyce, and your joy ſhall no man take from you.* Oh! what a glorious morning will that be, that ſhall have no cloud to obſcure its light, and never be followed with a ſad or gloomy night? As our *ſufferings* here did *abound, our Conſolations then will much more abound.* We ſhall forget all our Labour, and all our trouble, when we ſee to what a glorious Kingdom we are born, tho it was by pangs and torment; our joy will be like the joy of Harveſt, of an Harveſt that will requite us well for all our care and toil. Our hopes here are like the firſt ſtreaks of light in the Sky, that ſhew the coming of the day; but our poſſeſſion of bleſſedneſs will be as the Sun in the fulneſs of his Glory. That delight will indeed be the Sabbath of our thoughts, and the ſweet, and perpetual calmneſs of our minds, that will never be in horror and anguiſh any more. Precious and admirable are thoſe Tears that end ſo well, and which prepare us for ſo good a ſtate; who would not chuſe thus to weep, that he may rejoyce for ever? Lift up your eyes to the *Jeruſalem* above, the City of the Living God, ye Mourners and Priſoners of hope, for it is the City of Peace, Rev. 21.3,4. *Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they ſhall be his People, and God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God, and God ſhall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there ſhall be no more death, neither ſorrow nor crying, neither ſhall there be any more pain, for the former things are paſſed away.*

THE END.